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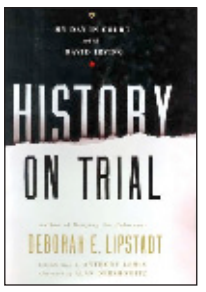

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Washtenaw Jewish News
c/o Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor
2939 Birch Hollow Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

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WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

February 2011 Shevat/Adar 5771 Volume XXXV: Number 5 FREE

Federation Maimonides Society to sponsor stem cell symposium

Avram Kluger, special to the WJN

On Sunday, February 13, at 9:30 a.m., the Maimonides Society of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor will host a symposium entitled "The Stem Cell Story: Facts, Fictions and Legalities" at the University of Michigan Kellogg Eye Center, located at 1000 Wall Street.

The symposium, which is free and open to the public, will explore the medicine, ethics, the law, and politics of the stem cell debate. Featured presenters will include Ivan Maillard, MD, PhD; Edward Goldman, JD; and Gerry Hoehn, PhD. This particular program is aimed at the medical community, the legal community, and anyone with an interest or curiosity about stem cells. It is also a great program for high school students who have an interest in science.

Dr. Maillard is a hematologist-oncologist specializing in stem cell research at the Life Sciences Institute at the University of Michigan. Goldman is the former U-M hospital attorney and associate professor at the U-M, whose research focuses on the intersection of medicine and law. Dr. Hoehn is a microbiologist/immunologist working on innovative pipeline oncology therapies at Teva Pharmaceuticals.

Edward Goldman, JD Gerry Hoehn, PhD. Ivan Maillard, MD, PhD

A dairy kosher-style brunch will be served at 9:30 a.m. and the program will begin promptly at 10:15 a.m. The breakfast and program are underwritten by a generous grant from Fifth Third Bank.

The Maimonides Society of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor aims at an inclusive affinity grouping for all Jewish health care professionals by serving as a forum on health care-related issues and acting as a resource for the Jewish and general communities.

It is named after Moses Ben-Maimon, a 12th century rabbi and philosopher, also known as the Rambam. Maimonides was the first person to write a systemic code of Jewish law, the Mishneh Torah. Trained as a physician, he served as court physician to the sultan of Egypt and wrote many books on medicine. He served as leader of the Cairo Jewish community.

The Ann Arbor Maimonides Society has hosted programs designed to appeal to broad community interests. Recent events have featured Richard Lichtenstein, PhD, on faults of the U.S. health care system; David Pinsky, MD, on advances in cardiac care; Sidney Wolfe, MD, on abuses of the pharmaceutical industry; and Congressman John Dingell, Marianne Udow-Phillips, MA, and John Billi, MD, on the recent health care reform legislation.

Register for the February 13 event by contacting Cindy Adams at 677-0100 or on-line at www.jewishannarbor.org. before February 8. For more information on the Maimonides Society, contact Avram Kluger at 677-0100 or Avram@jewishannarbor.org. ■

ACLU director to talk at JCS gathering

Neal Elkin, special to the WJN

The Jewish Cultural Society's Social Action Committee will present Ann Arbor lawyer and Michigan American Civil Liberties Union Legal Director Michael Steinberg for an update on the ACLU's current activities in Michigan. The talk and discussion will take place Friday, February 4, at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, as part of the First Friday Shabbat observance, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

"I think that the work of the American Civil Liberties Union tends to resonate strongly among Jews because we, as a people, are keenly aware of what happens to individuals with minority religious or political beliefs under totalitarian regimes," said Steinberg. "In my view, it is the mission of the ACLU to defend the constitutional values of freedom, equality and democracy to ensure that the United States does not morph into a country reminiscent of the police states from which we fled."

Steinberg will speak about some the cutting edge cases and issues on which the ACLU is working—including a recent case where the police strip-searched all 125 people in a bar looking for drugs; the Obama and Bush administration's use of the "state secrets doctrine" to shield the government from lawsuits alleging human rights violations; and the growing Islamophobia in the United States. He will also discuss the new "debtors prisons" in Michigan, medical marijuana, affirmative action, and other issues.

Michael Steinberg

This year the ACLU is celebrating its 90th anniversary. It has evolved from a small group of idealists committed to protecting Ameri-

continued on page 34

Yiddishe Cup at the Ark February 5

WJN staff writers

On Saturday, February 5, at 8 p.m., The Ark will once again welcome Yiddishe Cup to its stage. Reviving the wacky Jewish humor of the '50s and '60s by parodying everything from cha-cha to doo-wop to rock, Northeast Ohion's Yiddishe Cup is also one of the tightest, most vigorous klezmer bands around. Year after year they wind up on Jewish-music ten-best lists, and their live shows are legendary. Get ready for songs like "Gentile on My Mind" or "K'nock Around the Clock." But they can also play it straight, bringing the energy and tradition of klezmer music to their audiences. Says no less an authority than the late cartoonist Harvey Pekar: "Yiddishe Cup plays cleanly and enthusiastically. Clearly its members are enjoying themselves." Guest musicians this year are Gerald Ross (Ann Arbor's master of the Hawaiian steel guitar) and Temple Beth Emeth's Kol Halev choir, directed by Cantor Annie Rose. The shtickmeister—a klezmerite will be on hand to lead the audience in dancing. A video of a previous year's show can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/user/yiddishecup#p/u/9/NBcfjr3llkA.

Yiddishe Cup

The Ark is located at 316 South Main Street. Tickets are $20; $10 with student ID and can be ordered by calling 763-8587. ■

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U-M Communal Ledership Program at the General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America

JCLP student Sara Shvartzman and social work student Whitney Lacef eld with Vice-President Joseph Biden, November 10, 2010.

JCLP students, Ariel Pearl-Jacobvitz, Joshua Kantor, Liz Kohn, and Talya Gates-Monasch at the 2010 G. A.

Hadassah Game Night February 2

Julie Ellis, special to the WJN

Hadassah will host a Game Night, Wednesday, February 2, at 7 p.m., at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. This event is open to all women in the community for a $5 entry fee, payable at the door. There will be games of mah jongg, bridge, scrabble, bananagrams, and more. For those who want to learn mah jongg, there will be lessons available. The evening will also include a raffle, great prizes, desserts, snacks, and beverages.

RSVP to Julie Ellis at 665-0439 or juliergellis@yahoo.com, or Laurie Barnett at 996-2849 or lcbarn@comcast.net. For a ride, contact Martha Young at 769-7523.

WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

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The Washtenaw Jewish News is a free and independent newspaper. It is published monthly, with the exception of January and July. It is registered as a Non-profit Michigan Corporation. Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of its editors or staff

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American Jewish Press Association

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Signed letters to the editor are welcome; they should not exceed 400 words. Letters can be emailed to the editor at WJN.editor@gmail.com. Name will be withheld at the discretion of the editor.

Circulation: 5,000
Subscriptions:
$12 bulk rate inside Washtenaw County
$18 first-class subscription

The deadline for the March 2011 issue of the *Washtenaw Jewish News* is Monday, February 5.
Publication date: Thursday, February 23
Extra copies of the *Washtenaw Jewish News* are available at locations throughout Washtenaw County.

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Belin Lecture set for March 16

Kimberly Kunoff, special to the WJN

Deborah Lipstadt, Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies, Tam Institute for Jewish Studies and the Department of Religion, Emory University, will present the 21st Annual Belin Lecture in American Jewish Public Affairs on March 16, at 7 p.m., in Palmer Commons, Forum Hall, 100 Washtenaw Avenue. The title of the talk is "Playing the Blame Game: American Jews Look Back at the Holocaust."

Over the years since World War II, scholars and popular writers have closely analyzed Franklin D. Roosevelt's policies regarding the rescue of European Jewry during the Holocaust. Most have severely criticized FDR while others have defended him and his policies. This lecture will explore to what degree these analyses have become intertwined with contemporary issues facing the Jewish community. After tracing both the scholarly and popular historiography of America and the Holocaust, Lipstadt will address these questions: When is one reading history and when is history being used as a metonym for what is really a conversation about contemporary political issues facing the Jewish community? When is this conversation about the 1930s and 1940s and when is it really about what is happening in the 21st century?

Deborah Lipstadt

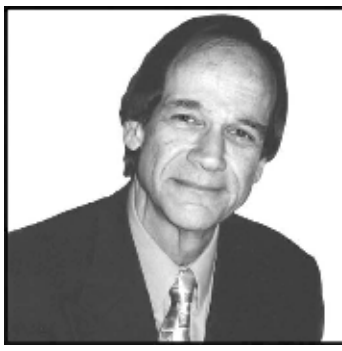
With the publication of Arthur Morse's *While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy in 1967*, American Jews began to recognize that there were grounds to criticize the policies of the Roosevelt administration for 'failing' to rescue European Jews during the 1930s and 1940s. (There had been, of course, criticism during the war by such groups as the Bergson Boys, but in the postwar period this critical approach had been muted.) Morse's popular account was followed by serious historical studies by Henry Feingold (*The Politics of Rescue*), David Wyman (*Paper Walls, The Abandonment of the Jews*) and Richard Breitman and Alan M. Kraut (*American Immigration Policy and European Jewry, 1933-45*). Most of these authors criticized to varying degrees American immigration policy and the behavior of the American Jewish community.

Beginning in the 1990s, a "pushback" of sorts evolved with strong briefs penned in defense of the Roosevelt administration. Authors such as W.D. Rubenstein (*The Myth of Rescue*) and Robert Rosen (*Saving Jews: Roosevelt and the Holocaust*) argued the White House did absolutely everything that could have been done and that its policies resulted in saving countless lives.

Finally, most recently, a third "school of thought" has made its voice heard. It emanates not just from scholars, but from the ranks of the American Jewish community. It is harshly critical of Roosevelt and those Jews who supported him (the vast majority of American Jews voted for FDR in all four presidential elections) and argues that they could have saved multitudes of Jews but did not because they were uncomfortable with the "type" of Jew who would be saved. This school of thought claims that these American Jewish supporters of Roosevelt did not want "those kinds of Jews" here in America.

Rather than analyze who is "right" and who is "wrong" about the Roosevelt administration, this lecture will ask to what degree are these debates a metonym for more contemporary issues. In other words, when American Jews severely criticize or defend FDR and his policies are they talking about FDR or, in reality, are they talking about contemporary issues?

Dr. Lipstadt's book *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving* [Ecco/HarperCollins, 2005] is the story of her libel trial in London against David Irving who sued her for calling him a Holocaust denier and right wing extremist. The book has been described as a "fascinating and meritorious work of legal—and moral—history." [Kirkus, November 2004]. It was ranked by the editors at Amazon.com as number four on its list of top ten history books of 2005. *The Daily Telegraph* (London) declared that the trial had "done for the new century what the Nuremberg tribunals or the Eichmann trial did for earlier generations." *The Times* (London) described it as "history has had its day in court and scored a crushing victory." The judge found David Irving to be a Holocaust denier, a falsifier of history, a racist, an anti-Semite, and a liar. Her legal battle with Irving lasted approximately six years. According to the *New York Times*, the trial "put an end to the pretense that Mr. Irving is anything but a self-promoting apologist for Hitler." In July 2001, the Court of Appeal resoundingly rejected Irving's attempt to appeal the judgment against him. ■



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Tuesdays

11 a.m.: Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. $4 per session, or 3 sessions for $10
Noon: Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person
1 p.m.: Games and Activities. Join in for a variety of games and activities including mahjong, quilting for the patients of Mott Hospital, art projects, and other card games.
1 p.m.: Wii sports including bowling, tennis, golf and baseball. No sports or computer experience necessary.

Wednesdays

9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.: French Music of the Romantic Era taught by Nate Adam. Free to Washtenaw county residents over 65 through Washtenaw Community College.

Thursdays

10 a.m.: Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. $4 per session, or 3 sessions for $10
11 a.m.: Current Events with Heather Dombey. A discussion of this week's news. Bring items of interest for group discussion.
Noon: Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person
1 p.m.: Thursday Special Events and Presentations (see below for details)
2:15 p.m.: Literary Group facilitated by Sidney Warschausky, Call Merrill Poliner, 971-0990, for more information and the current book.

Fridays

1:30 p.m.: Yiddish Reading Group at the Jewish Community Center. Call Ray Juni for additional information at 761-2765

Thursday special events

February 3
12:30 p.m.: Birthday celebration for all with February birthdays. Bring your family and friends for lunch and birthday cake.
1 p.m.: Are you tired of the cold gray Michigan winter? Join SPICE for a virtual trip to Hawaii. Don't forget your aloha shirt!

February 10
12:30 p.m.: A nurse from Care Response will monitor blood pressures. FREE.
1:00 p.m.: Martin Schichtman, professor of English Language and Literature and recently appointment director of Jewish Studies at Eastern Michigan University, presents on Irving Berlin's *God Bless America*.

February 17
1 p.m.: A nutritionist from the U-M Hospital and Health Systems speaks about nutritional supplements. Which are healthy, which are useful, which should you skip?

February 24
1 p.m.: Mark Tucker, U-M lecturer and creative director of Festi-fools, will bring a presentation (and maybe some samples) of the amazing puppets he has designed..

Mah-Jongg is cool again

Merrill Poliner, special to the WJN

According to the *Wall Street Journal,* mah-jongg's not just for grandma anymore. Enthusiasm for mah-jongg has waxed and waned over the past century. The game was popular in the 1920s, then again in the 1950s and early 1960s. But as more and more women joined the work force in the 1970s, many no longer had time to play mah-jongg for hours at a stretch.

From the tenements of New York City to the bungalows of the Catskills and the vast American suburbs, Jewish women have kept alive a game that otherwise fell out of fashion in the 1920s.

Modern mah-jongg mavens play in parks, at wine bars, in cafés and on the Internet. But for many players, the game is still best played the old-fashioned way—seated around a table with three friends.

Mahjong is a game of skill, strategy and calculation and a certain degree of chance. Four players sit around a table, each with a card of various numbers and colors, arranged like a secret code. Tiles are exchanged like a perfectly choreographed dance: left, across, right, then right, across, left. Tossing tiles into the middle of the table, the players call out mysterious names—"Four Crak! Three Bam! Eight Dot!"—until the winner finally shouts "Mah-jongg!" To the uninitiated, the process is foreign. To those familiar with the game, this is just a typical evening with the girls, evenings that have been happening in America for nearly 100 years.

The Jewish mah-jongg connection is hard to explain. Mah-jongg's precursors may be centuries old, but the game most Americans know dates back only about 150 years. Around 1846, a servant of the Chinese emperor combined the rules of popular card games of the time, and replaced cards with tiles to create mah-jongg. The name itself means sparrows—an allusion to the pictures of birds often engraved on the tiles.

The advent of mah-jongg coincided with China's opening to foreign traders, An American businessman, Joseph Babcock, and brought the game back to America in 1912. He changed the numbers on the tiles to numerals with which Americans are familiar (1, 2, 3, etc.) and by 1920, Abercrombie and Fitch, then a sporting and excursion goods store, was the first place to sell mah-jongg in America.

In 1937, a group of Jewish women formed the National Mah Jongg League (NMJL), which to this day strives to maintain consistency in the game. Each year the League issues a card listing winning combinations of tiles (which change every year) and standard regulations. This stability helped the game to survive. But Jewish involvement in the League doesn't fully explain the Jewish mah-jongg phenomenon.

Some historians suggest that Jews who fled Nazi Europe and made it to Shanghai got involved in local culture and adopted the game. Once those refugees immigrated to America in the mid-20th century, they helped keep mah-jongg alive.

As newer generations take up the game, they learn that many true friendships can develop from it. And that's the coolest part of it.

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor has mah-jongg playing sessions on Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. There is no charge for the cards, mah-jongg sets, refreshments, instruction or camaraderie.

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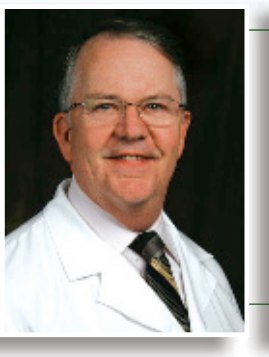

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Photos of Warsaw Ghetto now at Holocaust Memorial Center

Robyn Gorell, special to the WJN

A Day in the Warsaw Ghetto: A Birthday Trip in Hell," will be on display at the Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus till March 12, 2011.The exhibit is comprised of 85 of the still photographs that Wehrmacht Sergeant Heinz Jost took illegally while wandering inside the Warsaw Ghetto on his birthday in November 1941. He hid the pictures for about 40 years until he knew that he was dying.

The exhibit photos are grouped in themes: street life, beggars, peddlers, children, the dead and burial. Passages from original diaries written by ghetto residents provide historical context and complement the photographs. The photos depict the diversity of conditions, including people who are starving and ill and newcomers still thriving; illegal schools; people praying together; and book peddlers plying their trade amidst death and disease.

Jost apparently found the experience that day so disturbing that he kept the photographs secreted away, not even revealing their existence to his wife or family until 1980. Eventually, the pictures were given to Yad Vashem, Israel's national Holocaust memorial and museum, where curators selected the images for the exhibit. Originally, the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service circulated it throughout the United States.

The Holocaust Memorial Center executive director Stephen Goldman said, "This exhibit is an opportunity to get a glimpse of the life that went on under the most deplorable conditions in the Warsaw ghetto. Amidst starvation, degradation and death, the Jewish people tried to keep a semblance of daily normalcy and human dignity. Jost's photos chronicle unimaginable circumstances."

The launch of the exhibit in December 2010 coincided with the opening of the Holocaust Center's new gallery. The gallery for temporary exhibitions has been carved out of former storage areas and features 1500 square feet of uninterrupted floor space with an entry area, state-of-the art lighting, moveable interior walls, acoustic treatment and a structural roof grid where exhibit materials can be hung.

It is the mission of the Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus to remember those who perished and those who survived the Holocaust and, in a world increasingly faced with sectarian strife and intolerance, to set forth the lessons of Holocaust as a model for teaching ethical conduct and responsible decision-making. By highlighting those individuals who, in the midst of evil, stood for the best, rather than the worst of human nature, the Holocaust Memorial Center seeks to contribute to maintaining an open and free society. The facility is wheelchair accessible and free parking is available at both the North and South entrances. ■

The Holocaust Memorial Center is located at 28123 Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills. The exhibit is co-sponsored by The Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring. For museum hours and admission fees, call (248) 553-2400, or visit www.holocaustcenter.org

Save the date: JCC Gala Auction March 27

Halye Aisner, special to the WJN

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's 2011 Gala Auction will take place on Sunday, March 27, at 6 p.m., at the JCC. The event will celebrate the JCC's 25 years of service to the community and will honor Executive Director Leslie Bash on her retirement after almost ten years of service to the JCC. There will be a raffle and both live and silent auctions at the event as well as a strolling dinner catered by Simply Scrumptious and live musical entertainment. The auctioneer for the event will be Dr. David Magidson, former director of the Detroit Jewish Film Festival.

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF GREATER ANN ARBOR
JCC Gala Auction

A large auction committee led by Auction Chair Fran Martin has been working for months to acquire the many items for the auctions and raffle. The committee members include Carol Amster, Carol Finerman, Susan Fisher, Sheldon Ginns, Phyllis Herzig, Pam Landau, Judie Lax, Nancy Margolis, Sharon Newman, Prue Rosenthal, Joanne Smith, Linda Spector and Eileen Thacker.

Auction items include vacation and travel offers; sports memorabilia; restaurant gift certificates; jewelry; art; Judaica; tickets to cultural and entertainment events; clothing; home and food items; and more.

Sponsorships are available, which entitle contributors to tickets to the event as well as ads in the auction program. Auction tickets are $50 per person. In addition, there will be a Kids' Night Out Program at the JCC that evening.

For more information about auction admission, sponsorships, Kids' Night Out, or to donate goods and services, contact Rachael Shifrin at rachaelshifrin@jccfed.org or Rebekah Gamble at rebekahgamble@jccfed.org, or call the JCC at 971-0990. ■

Thank You From Jewish Family Services!

The JFS staff and Board of Directors along with Barry Nemon, M.D. and Barbara-Stark Nemon would like to thank everyone who came to our annual Bernstein Leadership Award event honoring the Stark-Nemons.

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The Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies

Thursday, February 3, 12 noon
"Jewish Language Politics"
Joshua L. Miller, University of Michigan
Alumni Center, 200 Fletcher, Ann Arbor

Thursday, February 10, 12 noon
"Launching the Historical Jewish Press Website: A Discussion of Six Years' Work to Rescue 200 Years of Printed History"
Yaron Tsur, Tel Aviv University
Alumni Center, 200 Fletcher, Ann Arbor

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February

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PROGRAM

Bartók	Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celeste, Sz. 106, BB 114 (1936)
Schumann	Piano Concerto in a minor, Op. 54 (1845)
Wagner	Overture to *Tannhäuser* (1845)

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New Century Chamber Orchestra with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg

Fri, Feb 4 | 8 PM
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PROGRAM

Wolf, arr. Drew	Italian Serenade (1887)
Bartók/Willner	Romanian Folk Dances (1915/17)
Piazzolla	Cuatro estaciónes porteñas (Four Seasons of Buenos Aires) (1964-70)
Tchaikovsky	Serenade in C Major, Op. 48 (1880)

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MEDIA PARTNER **WGTE 91.3 FM.**

Blues at the Crossroads: The Robert Johnson Centennial Concert

Thu, Feb 10 | 8 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

This concert features Big Head Todd & The Monsters, Hubert Sumlin, Cedric Burnside, Lightnin' Malcolm, as well as David "Honeyboy" Edwards, who at 94 is the only living person to have played with Robert Johnson.

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MEDIA PARTNERS **WEMU 89.1 FM, METRO TIMES, MICHIGAN CHRONICLE,** AND **ANN ARBOR'S 107ONE.**

Rafał Blechacz piano

Fri, Feb 11 | 8 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

PROGRAM

Mozart	Variations on "Lison dormait" in C Major, K. 264 (1778)
Debussy	L'isle joyeuse (1904)
Szymanowski	Sonata No. 1 in c minor, Op. 8 (1903-04)
Chopin	Ballade in g minor, Op. 23 (1835)
	Two Polonaises, Op. 26 (1835)
	Four Mazurkas, Op. 41 (1838-39)
	Ballade in F Major, Op. 38 (1839)

SPONSORED BY University of Michigan Health System

MEDIA PARTNERS **WGTE 91.3 FM, WRCJ 90.9 FM,** AND **DETROIT JEWISH NEWS.**

Vijay Iyer Trio and Rudresh Mahanthappa's Apex

Sat, Feb 12 | 8 PM
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MEDIA PARTNERS **WEMU 89.1 FM** AND **METRO TIMES.**

Concertante

Rafał Blechacz piano

Sun, Feb 13 | 4 PM
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM

PROGRAM

Elgar	Serenade for Strings in e minor, Op. 20 (1892)
Schoenberg	Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4 (1899)
Chopin	Piano Concerto No. 1 in e minor, Op. 11 (1830)

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The Legacy Tour Merce Cunningham Dance Company

Fri, Feb 18 | 8 PM
Sat, Feb 19 | 8 PM
POWER CENTER

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MEDIA PARTNERS **BETWEEN THE LINES, METRO TIMES,** AND **ANN ARBOR'S 107ONE.**

Schubert Cycle Concert 2 Takács Quartet

Sun, Feb 20 | 4 PM
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM

PROGRAM

Schubert	String Quartet in B-flat Major, D. 112 (1814)
Schubert	String Quartet in a minor, D. 804 ("Rosamunde") (1824)
Schubert	String Quartet in G Major, D. 887 (1826)

National Theatre Live: Shakespeare's *King Lear*

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Michael Grandage director

Sun, Feb 20 | 7 PM
MICHIGAN THEATER

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Wed, Feb 23 | 8 PM
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Women's Health Day at the JCC

Mimi Weisberg, special to the WJN

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, along and the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, will host a Women's Health Day, Sunday, March 6, at 9:30 a.m., at the JCC. The event will include a heart healthy breakfast by Simply Scrumptious and health screenings. Kathy Kastan, LCSW, MAEd, will be the keynote speaker. Speakers for this event will also include Renee Pinsky, MD and Elizabeth Jackson, MD. The cost for the event is $18.

The numbers are overwhelming. Cardiovascular disease, which includes heart disease, hypertension and stroke, is the number one killer of women, according to the American Heart Association. It kills half a million American women each year. "Only 8 percent of women saw it as their biggest health threat," says cardiologist Sharonne Hayes, MD, director of the Mayo Clinic Women's Heart Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. "There is a disconnection: they know it's a major disease, but they think they're going to die of breast cancer." Significant issues surrounding women's heart health and medical care were brought to light in a survey of 204 women with heart disease reported in the January/February 2003 issue of *Women's Health Issues*. Hayes is also the co-author of the report, funded by WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women With Heart Disease.

Missing the diagnosis

Many women in the early stages of heart disease say they were misdiagnosed. In this survey, only 35 percent of the women and 68 percent of their doctors associated their symptoms with heart problems. Most of the women surveyed had typical cardiac symptoms, such as chest pain and arm pain or pressure, or shortness of breath.

Kathy Kastan was a 41-year-old trim athlete and non-smoker when she began experiencing shortness of breath. She attributed it to asthma, which can be brought on by exercise. But it kept getting worse and on one bike ride, the symptoms became severe. Kastan's husband, a physician, said he doubted she had heart disease, nevertheless suggested she see a cardiologist. The cardiologist proclaimed her healthy. The very next week she collapsed in the mountains. "This time I had classic Hollywood heart attack symptoms with chest pain radiating up into my jaw and down my arm, shortness of breath, pasty pale skin and nausea," she says. She immediately went to a second cardiologist. "He said to go home and exercise and we'll see what happens. The minute I started running I collapsed again." She had the cardiologist put her on the treadmill and raise the level of

exertion. "Then he was the one who turned pasty pale. He said I had a blockage in the arteries." The doctor quickly confirmed his suspicion by inserting a catheter to look into her arteries. Kastan remained ill following double bypass surgery. "Friends started wondering if some of this was in my head," she says. She contacted WomenHeart for support and was urged to go to a women's heart clinic. She went to Hayes. "She listened. She may challenge me, but she always supports me. She'd never question me as an intelligent human being or question my feelings."

The message

Kastan speaks around the country about women and heart disease and has seen doctors' attitudes improve in the past couple of years. "They're more aware of women and heart disease and aren't dismissing women as readily," she says. She urges women to pay attention to their bodies and become active consumers of health care. "I was uncomfortable going to the Mayo Clinic [for a second opinion] because I didn't want to hurt my cardiologist's feelings," she says. "That shouldn't have been my concern. Be your own best advocate."

Sponsors for the event include St. Joe's Health System, Medtronic, and One on One Fitness Club. Honorary sponsors include Beth Israel Women's League, Jewish Women's Circle, the Ann Arbor Chapter of ORT, the Ann Arbor Chapter of Hadassah, and Temple Beth Emeth Sisterhood.

For more information, contact Mimi Weisberg at mimiweisberg@jccfed.org or 971-0990. ■

Learn about Purim with the Jewish Women's Circle

Mae Sander, special to the WJN

The Jewish Women's Circle of Ann Arbor will meet on Wednesday, February 16, to celebrate and learn more about Purim customs. The title of the meeting is "Get into the Spirit of Hamantashen."

On Purim, the Book of Esther instructs one to give foods and drinks both to one's friends and to the poor. The custom of giving *shalach manot*, or plates of baked goods (of course including hamantashen) and other foods, arises from this biblical passage. Thus the meeting includes two topics: the art of giving generously to others as well as the art of baking hamantashen.

Mimi Weisberg, director of Jewish Cultural Arts and Education at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, will lead a discussion of the arts of giving and receiving. All participants will share their ideas about responsibility for giving in our community and about how they choose to help.

Esther Goldstein, Jewish Women's Circle organizer, explains: "We need to learn how and where our giving can be effective. We also need to learn how to receive from other people, not just plates of food but other generous acts and gifts from our friends. Weisberg will suggest some ways that we can be active in our community, perhaps as a volunteer, perhaps in other ways."

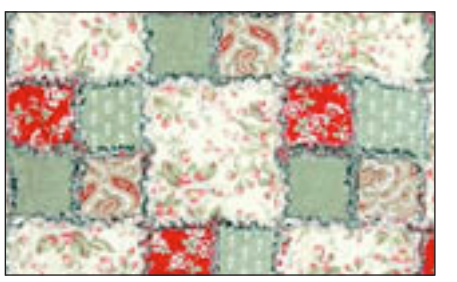
Meanwhile, participants will also work with dough and several flavors of filling to learn or improve their hamantashen-making skills. Recipes submitted in advance of the meeting will be printed and distributed so that participants can take home the best ideas.

Jewish Women's Circle activities information, location, and registration for each meeting, is available via the group's Facebook page (title: Jewish Women's Circle of Washtenaw County). A donation of $10 is suggested. Participants are welcome to submit a recipe for Purim in advance via email. Women of all ages, regardless of affiliation or non-affiliation, are invited to sign up either through Facebook or by contacting Esther Goldstein at 995-3276 or esther@jewmich.com.

JCC Quilters help keep Mott patients warm

Merrill Poliner, special to the WJN

Twice a month, the sewing machines and irons come out of the cupboard at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor and are put to use making quilts for the patients at the University of Michigan Mott Children's Hospital. The JCC quilters are looking for additional volunteers to help them make more quilts in 2011. All that's needed is creativity and desire to help others; materials, equipment and instruction are provided. Quilting takes place at the JCC on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. For more information or to participate, contact Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 or merrill@jfsannarbor.org.



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Upcoming Frankel Center events

Kimberly Kunoff, special to the WJN

"Which 'Jews' Were Still Jewish in Interwar Germany?"

February 3, 4 p.m.

University of Chicago professor Leora Auslander asks the questions that have been raised by countless Jewish studies scholars– "What makes a Jew Jewish? Religious observance? If so, of what intensity and form? Self-identification? Classification by others (both Jewish and not)? Social, political, intellectual or aesthetic practices?"– and proposes an altogether new approach. "Finding satisfying answers has proved elusive," says Auslander. "I would like to argue that rather than abandon these fundamental queries, we should look at them differently. Which 'Jews' were still Jewish in Interwar Germany? Auslander will use the evidence of material culture, social networks, and everyday practices to propose answers to the question at the February 3 lecture. While the specific case addressed will be that of Jews in the Weimar Republic, she believes that the approach may be useful to those struggling with the conceptual and empirical problems raised by all efforts to classify (or resist classification). The lecture will take place at 435 South State Street, 1014 Tisch Hall, on the University of Michigan campus.

Leora Auslander

Ancient legend of Manassah and Isaiah explored

February 9, 4 p.m.

Richard Kalmin, of the Jewish Theological Seminary, will lecture on "Manasseh Sawed Isaiah With a Saw of Wood: An Ancient Legend in Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Persian Sources." By examining ancient and medieval accounts of the martyrdom of the biblical prophet Isaiah, Kalmin proposes that during the mid-4th century CE, a period of intense eastern provincial Romanization of Jewish Babylonia began. At that time, Kalmin argues, Babylonia became part of the emerging cultural unity that was gradually forming in pre-Islamic Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, and western Persia. In addition, he argues that Christian sources attest to the same developments, indicating a significant linkage between the Jewish and Christian communities in late-antiquity Mesopotamia. The lecture will take place at 202 South Thayer Street, Room 2022, on the U-M campus.

Richard Kalmin

The debate over Crypto Jews

February 22, 4 p.m.

"On the Hard Evidence of Exile: Secrecy, Authenticity, and Race in Representations of New Mexico's Crypto-Jews" is the topic for the talk by Ruby Tapia, from Ohio State University. In her 2008 book of black-and-white photographs, *Image and Memory*, Cary Herz documented *tallit*-clad and candle-lit New Mexicans testifying to their Crypto-Jewish identity. In 2006, folklorist Judith Neulander collaborated with geneticists to "resolve" that, in scientific fact, Crypto-Jews by and large do not exist in New Mexico. Impressive illustrations flesh out the texts of both positions: Herz's body-subjects pose with Jewish objects as irrefutable identifying evidence, while Neulander's article stakes a place in the *Annals of Human Biology* with a historical sketch of Sephardic migration embellished with definitive chromosomal charts. The contradictions and tensions between these two documents constitute a fascinating debate on Crypto-Jewish authenticity, but the contradictions and tensions within each of them point to other, perhaps even more confounding levels of political, cultural and methodological dissonance. This lecture will explore these dissonances and establishes New Mexico's Crypto-Jews as an important site for understanding the intricate relationship between blood, image, and identity within Jewish bodies of exilic and diasporic knowledge. The lecture will take place at 202 South Thayer Street, Room 2022, on the U-M campus. ■

Ruby Tapia

Op-Ed: The real danger of delegitimizing Israel on campus

By David Bernstein

WASHINGTON (JTA)—There is a serious threat facing Israel's long-term standing in this country resulting from a prolonged campaign to delegitimize the Jewish state on campus. But it's probably not what you think.

What commonly incurs Jewish indignation are the more blatant anti-Israel spectacles. They range from "apartheid walls"—barriers erected by anti-Israel students to signify the Israeli security fence—to mock security checkpoints, from boycotts and divestment initiatives aimed at impeding university investments in Israel to hostile anti-Israel protests such as last year's disruption orchestrated by students at the University of California, Irvine, of Israeli U.S. Ambassador Michael Oren's speech.

While these hostile activities unquestionably are meant to portray Israel as an oppressive and illegitimate state, such inflammatory acts do not resonate with the vast majority on campus. In recent focus groups conducted by The Israel Project, a diverse set of students was nearly unified in its opposition to boycotts and other such tactics, regardless of the students' feelings about the Jewish state.

The use of these tactics is certainly growing, but support for them is not.

In the fall semester of 2010, a watered-down resolution calling on Princeton University to sell non-Israeli hummus alongside the Sabra brand was defeated overwhelmingly because it smacked of a boycott. At Columbia, a mock checkpoint, where volunteers were blindfolded and forced to kneel at "gunpoint" in front of students dressed as barking Israeli soldiers, failed to resonate with more than the radical fringe of the student body.

The real danger is that the present campus environment in the United States may adversely affect the future of U.S. support for Israel. Americans may never become Israel haters, as we see in parts of Europe—hostility has been mainstreamed there, potentially affecting diplomatic and economic ties with Israel, and London has been dubbed the "Mecca of de-legitimization" by the Israeli think tank Re'ut—but they may cease to be Israel lovers.

Last fall, the Student Democrats at a prominent university wrote to the pro-Israel student leadership of the university that they had adopted "a policy of non-endorsement on Israel-Palestine issues." The Student Democrats explained that there was too much division in their own ranks to continue to co-sponsor pro-Israel student activities.

Such a letter may not make your blood boil like an apartheid wall, but it is far more ominous.

For decades the pro-Israel community has enjoyed bipartisan support for Israel in the United States. Congress members from both parties typically vote overwhelmingly in Israel's favor. This support influences the actions of the White House, which in turn acts to protect Israel from the scourge of hostility it faces elsewhere in the international community. The U.S. provides billions of dollars each year to Israel in security assistance, which gives Israel a qualitative security advantage over its enemies.

If, however, the Student Democrats at this particular school reflect a larger trend, it is quite possible that Democratic support in the next generation is facing serious erosion. Worrisome signs already are afoot.

While young people and particularly mainstream Democrats exposed to hostility on campus may not now or ever join the movement to boycott Israel, over time they may feel less sympathetic toward the Jewish state and more ambivalent about the special relationship between the U.S. and Israel. When these young leaders become the next generation of Democratic Party representatives, it may become much tougher to garner those large bipartisan majorities.

Israel depends on support from both parties, especially considering the rapid political cycling giving each party short-lived turns at power. Israel can ill afford to become a one-party cause.

The struggle on campus, then, is to assure that the next generation of American political leadership is as supportive of Israel as the last one. In a world turning ever more unfriendly to Israel, it is more important than ever that we do all that we can now to ensure that American support, at least, remains strong into the future.

While it is important to oppose walls and boycotts, it is far more critical that we create the kind of environment on campus that will sustain two-party support into the future. ■

David Bernstein is executive director of The David Project.

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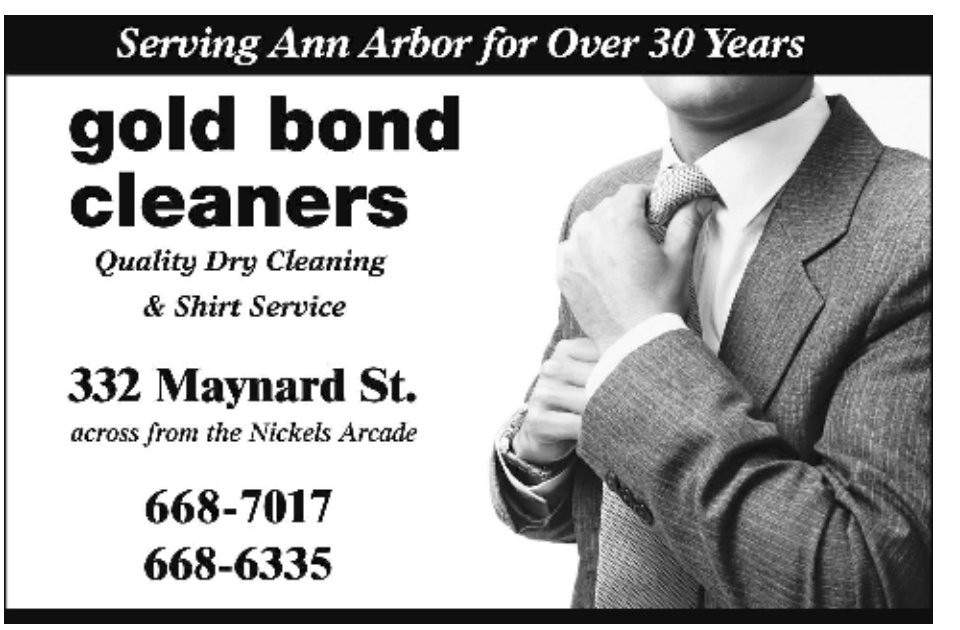

Major funding boost for Birthright from Israeli gov't ups ante for philanthropists

By Ben Harris

NEW YORK (JTA)—Boosters of Birthright Israel are hoping that the Israeli government's decision to more than double its investment in the popular free 10-day trips for young Diaspora Jews will yield dramatic results.

But their hopes could be short lived if Jewish philanthropists fail to ramp up their own contributions to the tune of some $222 million over the next three years.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced last month that his government would provide $100 million in financing to Birthright Israel from 2011 to 2013.

The funding, which will rise over the three-year period from $26 million this year to $40 million by 2013, is aimed at increasing the number of Birthright participants to 51,000 annually by 2013. Last year, 30,000 Diaspora Jews went on the program.

"It's a historic decision which is going to revolutionize the relationships of young Jews to the State of Israel," said Gidi Mark, the CEO of Taglit-Birthright Israel. "It's going to bring, for the first time ever, the majority of young Jews to Israel."

That prediction will hold true only if Jewish philanthropists, who now fund about half the Birthright budget, increase their investment.

While the program brings tens of thousands of 18- to 26-year-old Diaspora Jews to Israel each year, spots are available now for only about half who apply.

About a decade old, Birthright Israel was envisioned as a more or less equal partnership between the Israeli government, the Jewish federation system and private philanthropists, with each providing about a third of the budget.

Hailed as one of the most successful Jewish identity projects in recent memory, Birthright Israel has brought more than 250,000 young Jews to Israel since 2000.

But the federation share of funding has remained low. In 2010, federations provided only about $6 million of Birthright's $76 million budget, according to Birthright officials. That has increased pressure on the Israeli government and donors to make up the difference.

The Birthright Israel Foundation, the charitable organization that helps fund the program, raised $49 million for Birthright in 2010. The budget for 2011 is projected at $87 million. By 2013, it will be $126 million, Birthright officials said.

Robert Aronson, the president of the foundation, said there is no question that the Israeli government will reduce its giving if the foundation fails to raise the balance needed to bring significantly more Diaspora Jews to Israel over the next three years. It'll take another $222 million over three years, he estimates. "We have our work cut out for us," Aronson said.

A major U.S. fundraising push under way is targeting Birthright alumni, as well as their parents and grandparents, in an effort to expand the foundation's financial base well beyond the core group of major philanthropists that helped launch the organization.

Birthright has been sustained recently in large part by a $100 million gift from gaming magnate Sheldon Adelson, as well as continuing support from founding philanthropists Michael Steinhardt and Charles Bronfman. But in the decade since its founding the donor base has expanded to more than 13,000.

Aronson says it is most important to ask parents and grandparents for contributions, as they care about Birthright because they can see its effect.

Hailed as one of the most successful Jewish identity projects in recent memory, Birthright Israel has brought more than 250,000 young Jews to Israel since its inception in 2000. Based on data showing that an Israel trip was among the most effective contributors to Jewish identity formation, Birthright aimed to counter trends showing declining connection to Israel and weaker Jewish identification among young Diaspora Jews.

In 2009, a Birthright-funded study by Brandeis University found that participants in the program were 57 percent more likely to marry other Jews and 30 percent more likely to view raising Jewish children as "very important."

As Birthright's numbers grow, the level of Jewish engagement of participants tends to decline, which could dilute that largely rosy picture. But Len Saxe, the Brandeis professor who directed the 2009 study, said further research shows that the impact of Birthright doesn't change even if the participants come from less Jewishly engaged backgrounds.

"It really doesn't matter exactly what the mix is," Saxe told JTA. "You still have the Birthright effect."

Expanding the range of that effect now depends in large measure on how much money Aronson and his staff can wring from the pockets of American Jews, a task sure to be complicated by a still uncertain economic climate.

"It's going to take a lot of hard work, a lot of effort," Aronson said. "When I see the results of Birthright Israel, and the product in effect that we create for our young people, I am very optimistic that the American Jewish community will respond." ■

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Justice, ethical living, and Torah

Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, special to the WJN

Throughout the years that I have been answering questions on our website's "Ask the Rabbi" page, one of the most frequent topics that I am asked about is the relationship between the observance of Jewish law and living an ethical life. The question can be asked in various ways, but the concern is with those who observe Jewish law scrupulously but fail to live up to certain ethical standards that any reasonable human being should embrace. Shouldn't ethics and morals take precedence over religious observance?

This is a very serious issue and one that deserves consideration. I could not hope to do the question justice in this article, but there are some things that can and should be said.

Jewish law has its roots in the Torah. There is no question that one of the hallmarks of the Torah compared with other documents of roughly the same era is the Torah's insistence on justice and ethical living. It is absolutely true that some of the Torah laws do not seem particularly "moral" today; but in comparison with other law codes of the time, the commandments that people should be treated equally, that we should seek out a "holy community," that people should honor their parents, return lost objects, feel concern for the pain of animals, and pursue justice in their courts are quite impressive. While we might wish the Torah had mandated equal treatment for men and women or prohibited slavery completely or banned lashes as punishment for certain crimes, we still must appreciate the Torah's strong stand on certain issues of ethics and morality.

Later rabbis have sought to expand the Torah's steps at ethical living. For example, while the Torah issues its prescription teaching that rebellious children must be brought to the court for execution, the rabbis of the Talmud claimed that that law was never observed and they developed all means of loopholes so that it would never happen. Similarly, by the Middle Ages, rabbis were teaching that slavery was wrong even if the slaves were protected by laws governing the conduct of owners mandated by the Torah.

So, the first point that needs to be made is that rabbis should and must continue to look at the laws and continue to explore ways to make them more ethical as situations change. One example of this is the recent efforts by communities to address ethical issues of *kashrut*, the dietary laws, and insure that food is not only kosher but that is produced in ways which reflect proper treatment of workers and proper concern for the environment. (For more on this issue, you can go to www.magentzedek.org).

Secondly, it must be pointed out that our rabbis constantly encouraged us to recognize that in certain situations, laws had to be broken for the sake of greater values. For example, the concept of *pikkuach nefesh* requires that most any law and all laws of ritual, such as Shabbat observance, can and must be broken if life is at stake or if one could be significantly harmed by the observance of the law. In addition, the rabbis mandated that values such *as shalom bayit*, peace within a home or a community, is important enough to be the justification for transgressing certain laws. And, finally, the rabbis always taught that acting *lifnim mishurat hadin,* beyond the letter of the law, for ethical or moral concerns is to be praised.

It is obviously wrong for anyone to act immorally and it is particularly infuriating to us when we see observant Jews acting in ways that are unethical or immoral. Seeing these cases might lead us to dismiss the value of religious observance altogether. This would be a terrible injustice. While those cases make the headlines, many, many people find religious observance to inspire us to act ethically. None of us is the person we should be. Each of us can improve our behavior. But, that does not mean that we should reject all of the many ritual laws of our faith to concentrate only on being good people. The two can go hand in hand.

I believe that one of the most important purposes of the *mitzvot* is to lead us to being better people. We may not see the value of each individual observance, but structuring our lives according to the traditions of our people was intended to help us be the people that God wants us to be. This occasionally takes some reinterpretation of the laws, consideration of an overriding value that would cause us to suspend the observance of the law in a particular situation, and most importantly takes constantly reminding ourselves that being a ritually observant Jew and being a good person is not an "either-or" but a "both-and" proposition.

Religious observance cannot take the place of being a *mentsch* but can, in fact, inspire us to work more diligently to be the best we can be. ■

Ki Tiso—…taking the census in biblical times

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, special to the WJN

In Parsha Ki Tiso, the Torah speaks about the counting of the Jewish people—taking a census. The way it was done was that each male over the age of 20 would give a half-shekel and the counters would count all the half-shekels. That would determine the outcome of the census. The Lubavitcher Rebbe elaborates on the reason why the Torah specifies that we had to give a half-shekel. When a person does a mitzvah, he is expected to do it in the best and most complete way. That's why in many mitzvahs there is a big emphasis on making it complete. We want to give *Hashem* something properly completed, as opposed to something incomplete. So here we see just the opposite, that in order to do the mitzvah it has to be done with a half shekel—not a complete shekel. The Torah tells us that a rich man is not allowed to give more than a half and a poor man is not allowed to give less than a half. Everyone has to give a half. Furthermore, when the Torah gives more details about this mitzvah and specifies a half-shekel, it asks the question "What is the size of a shekel?" It answers that a shekel is equal to 20 gaira (a certain measurement standard of the day). Consequently, a half-shekel is worth 10 gaira. So now the question is, "Why does the Torah use the term half- shekel (incomplete) on the one hand and then, on the other hand, we don't emphasize the complete number (Kabbalistically, ten is a number denoting completion), of 10gaira, to describe the value of the half-shekel?" Why emphasize half when the general rule in Judaism is to emphasize wholeness?

Our rabbis tell us, in the Mishna and the Midrash, that the reason the Jewish people have to give a half-shekel is to atone for the sin of the Golden Calf. The command to give a half is, in itself, the correction for the sin of the Golden Calf. What was the essence of the sin of the golden calf? It was that we worshipped something other than HaShem alone. It was idol worshipping—separating from Hashem. Why would a person separate from Hashem, or worship something other than Hashem? It is because the person perceives himself as a separate entity from Hashem—an independent entity who doesn't need Hashem to keep him going. This is the essential existential misconception that leads a person to idolatry. Once a person feels they are a separate, independent entity from Hashem, they are guilty of idolatry.

Therefore, in order to correct the sin of idolatry, one must recognize that Hashem is one and there is no separate entity besides Hashem. An individual is not an independent entity. We are a component of a larger whole. The only way we can live is by cleaving to Hashem. When a person becomes one with Hashem and recognizes that there is no other than Hashem—that is the correction for idolatry.

Therefore, the Torah says we should use a half-shekel. This is recognition that we are only half of the equation. We are an incomplete part of the overall system. The other half is Hashem. It is only when we cleave to the other half, Hashem that we complete the equation and become whole. So the lesson we learn is that each Jewish person is half of the partnership. We are not separate entities, but rather halves of a whole with Hashem. We represent this by each person contributing a half-shekel.

With this we'll understand another thing we see later on when Moshe Rabbeineu is pleading with Hashem for mercy to forgive the Jews for the sin of the golden calf. Hashem says to Moses he'll make a covenant with the Jewish people. In those days, when two people wanted to make a covenant, they would cut something that was whole into two equal parts. They would then walk between the two opposing parts. This constituted the accepted ritual of those entering into a covenant with each other. This is the purpose of the half-shekel census. Even though we tend to see ourselves as separate entities, in reality we are only half of the equation. Hashem is the other half—our partner in a covenant. Two halves required for the whole to be complete. As the Zohar says, Hashem and the Jewish people are all one entity. ■

Shabbat at Temple Beth Emeth

Ronnie Simon, special to the WJN

Shabbat

At 7:30 p.m. every Friday, Erev Shabbat services are held in the sanctuary, led by Rabbi Delson, and Cantor Rose, and followed by an oneg in the Social Hall. Once each month, this is a Family Service, with family prayerbooks. The February Family Service in on February 4. Torah is read every Friday night in services.

Once each month, middle school students lead their own services in the chapel, followed by an oneg or activity. This month, the service is on February 11. High school services led by AARTY members also take place monthly on a varied schedule.

Monthly Shabbat dinner

Once each month, Shabbat dinner for adults and older children is served in the Social Hall at 6 p.m. The menu varies and is posted on the TBE website one week ahead; reservations can be made through the website (www.templebethemeth.org). The cost is $10 for adults and $5 for children ages 12 and under. Dinner this month is on February 18.

Shabbat morning

During Rabbi Levy's sabbatical, there is a once a month Torah study led by Rabbi David Aaron, this month on February 19. Rabbi Aaron, a professor of Bible at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio, is a visiting scholar with the University of Michigan's Frankel Center. Weekly Torah study is on hiatus during Rabbi Levy's sabbatical.

Every week there is a 10 a.m. Shabbat service. On February 5, 12, and 19 it will be held in the chapel, and on February 26 it will include a bar mitzvah celebration and be in the sanctuary. TBE welcomes all to attend our Shabbat Services.

Shabbat for young families — every week

Tot Shabbat begins at 5:30 p.m. with Cantor Rose, and the Tot Shabbat Song Team leading a service of songs, dancing, stories, and blessings. At 6 p.m., dinner is served, featuring mac and cheese, fish sticks, salad bar, and applesauce. Dinner is $5 per person.

Following dinner, there are two options for young children and their parents. Cantor Rose leads Sukkat Shalom, a service including songs, prayers, Torah reading, and a D'var Torah for children in kindergarten through mid-elementary age. Also at 6:30 p.m., tots and their parents are invited to Shira, a lively song session led by U-M graduate and former NFTY-MAR song leader Hannah Winkler.

Oneg Shabbat popsicles are served to all youngsters and parents following Sukkat Shalom and Shira.

February events at Temple Beth Emeth

Brett Willner, special to the WJN

Spirituality Book Club

Tuesday, February 1, 7:30–9 p.m.; Thursday, February 3, noon–1:30 p.m.

Temple Beth Emeth's Spirituality Book Club, with Cantor Annie Rose, will be reading two books this month: *The Empty Chair: Finding Joy and Hope…Timeless Wisdom from a Hasidic Master, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov* and *I Asked for Wonder: A Spiritual Anthology*, by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Samuel Dresner. Analysis of texts and group discussion are always lively. Participants are welcome to drop in for selected sessions or the entire series through June. There is an evening session, meeting at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday, and a daytime session, meeting at noon on the first Thursday. Visit the TBE website, www.templebethemeth.org , for the complete book list. Contact Cantor Rose, cantorannie@gmail.com, with questions

Women's Torah Study

Monday, February 7 and 21

The first and third Mondays of each month, from 7–8:30 p.m., Cantor Annie Rose leads a Women's Torah Study. Published recently, the Women of Reform Judaism's, *A Women's Commentary*, has become a major source of insight for those studying Torah in depth or simply reading the weekly parsha, portion. This month the Women's Torah group will be studying Tetzaveh and Va'yakhel.

Tot Story Hour with Wendy Holden

Monday, February 7, 10 a.m.

Once a month TBE's librarian, Wendy Holden, will share a story with tots at 10 a.m. in the TBE library. It is a great way to meet other families and introduce children to wonderful Jewish books. No need to RSVP, just stop on by.

Mourning and Mitzvah

Tuesday, February 8 and 15, 2:30 p.m.

Join Cantor Rose as she leads a class on dealing with mourning and grief. The class will look at issues such as end-of-life choices, funeral services and unveilings; grieving and mourning; *shiva, sh'loshim*, and the role of being a comforter. This class is open to all community members.

Men's Torah Study

Wednesday, February 9 and 23, 7:30 p.m.

Join TBE's Men's Torah study for an evening of learning. The evening includes learning, a bit of fun, and refreshments. Contact Roger Stutesman, rgstutesman@sbcglobal.net, for more information.

Whirly Ball

Saturday, February 12 , 6:30–9 p.m.

TBE Twenties and Thirties are having an evening of Whirly Ball and dinner. The event will cost $12 and dinner will be paid by each individual. TNT will meet at 6:30 p.m. for dinner at El Camino Real, 625 Hilton Ave, by Briarwood Circle, and then go to Whirly Ball of Ann Arbor, 750 Phoenix Drive, at 8 p.m. RSVP to Brett Willner, bwillner@templebethemeth.org, for dinner and/or Whirly Ball by Wednesday, February 2.

Movie Tuesday

Tuesday, February 15, 1–3 p.m.

This month's free day-time movie will be the Israeli comedy, *The Band's Visit*. When the Alexandria (Egypt) Ceremonial Police Orchestra comes to Israel to play a concert at an Arab cultural center, they find themselves lost in a small Jewish town in the Negev desert with a similar name. Unable to get a bus out of until the next the next day and no hotels for the band's members to stay at, local residents decide to take the musicians in for the evening. Refreshments are provided and child care can be arranged with advance notice. Everyone is welcome.

Shabbat Torah Study with Rabbi David Aaron

Saturday, February 19, 8:50 a.m.

Rabbi Aaron, a professor of Bible at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio, is a visiting scholar with the University of Michigan's Frankel Center. During Rabbi Levy's sabbatical, he will lead a once-a-month Saturday morning Torah study session. This is a great opportunity to study the Torah portion for the week with an excellent scholar. Everyone is welcome to these monthly Torah study sessions. For more information contact Rabbi Lisa Delson at ldelson@templebethemeth.org.

Beit Café: Adult Education Night

Monday, February 28, 7–9 p.m.

Join TBE for the final Beit Café: Adult Education Night of the year. There is a great line up of community teachers for this evening. Participants may choose two of five classes to attend, with a South American themed refreshment break, around 8 p.m. Topics this month include: "Hebrew Calligraphy," Photography of Synagogues From Around the World, "The Story of Esther in Renaissance Art," and "Why American Jews Can't Talk to Each Other about Israel." Come for one hour or both to this free event. For more information, contact Rabbi Delson at ldelson@templebethemeth.org.

Twenties & Thirties: "Chopped"– Second Annual Cooking Competition

Saturday, March 5, 6 p.m.

Do you love watching shows like *Iron Chef*, *Hell's Kitchen*, and *Top Chef*? Join TNT for "Chopped," the second annual cooking competition, on Saturday, March 5, at 6 p.m. The event will cost $5. Individuals should bring their own refreshments. Feel free to come and compete, be a food judge, or just to enjoy the food afterwards.

Grief Support Group

A Grief Support Group is forming at Temple Beth Emeth and is open to the community. The group will be moderated by a trained professional. If you are interested, contact Rabbi Lisa Delson at ldelson@templebethemeth.org or 665-4744.

All Ensemble Concert

Sunday, February 13, 4–5 p.m.

All of the musical ensembles at Temple Beth Emeth will present a lively hour of music at this annual concert. Participants include the Youth Choir, Middle School Shir Chadash, High School Shir Chadash, and Kol Halev. There is no charge, and the public is welcome to attend.

Chabad offers new JLI course

Rabbi Zalman Abraham, special to the WJN

The Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) will present Toward a Meaningful Life: A Soul- Searching Journey for Every Jew, the institute's new six-session Winter 2011 course, beginning on Tuesday, February 15.

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein of Ann Arbor Chabad House will conduct the six course sessions on Tuesdays through March 22, at 9 a.m. at the Chabad House and at 7:30 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor.

"The objective of this course is to teach and empower individuals of all backgrounds with new life skills based on traditional Torah thought, thereby enabling them to transform the way they view their daily lives," said one of the course organizers in JLI's headquarters in Brooklyn. "The course offers an antidote to the monotony and grind of unchanging routines. It provides newfound energy and exhilaration in taking on challenges, and it offers practical strategies for developing a deeper sense of joy and satisfaction."

Through the examination of the spectrum of life, personal growth, relationships, home, work, special challenges, and the role of God and faith in daily existence, each session will also examine the Torah's perspective, and students will be invited to challenge their current views and consider more meaningful approaches to these topical subjects.

In addition, each lesson will conclude with a toolbox of exercises and guidelines to help students make full use of the ideas and strategies that will be discussed.

Although the course is prepared by Rabbi Simon Jacobson, head of the Meaningful Life Center in New York City and author of the best-selling book *Toward a Meaningful Life*, the sessions are freestanding and no prior familiarity with the book is assumed.

"Day after day, life can be a treadmill, as we go through the motions without asking why or seeking what really matters to us," said Abraham. "This course offers recipes, tips, and techniques for not only discovering where your true meaning lies, but in actually making it a part of your daily existence.

JLI Course participants , Fall 2010

These sessions will help you see life as the mysterious, challenging, and satisfying wonder that it really is."

Like all previous JLI programs, Toward a Meaningful Life is designed to appeal to people at all levels of Jewish knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple, or other house of worship.

Interested students may call 995-3276 x 2 or visit www.myJLI.com for registration and other course-related information.

JLI, the adult education branch of Chabad Lubavitch, offers programs in more than 300 U.S. cities and in numerous foreign locations, including Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Venezuela. More than 220,000 students have attended JLI classes since the organization was founded in 1998. ■

JCS activities

Neal Elkin, special to the WJN

Teen Community Leadership Program

JCS teens, under the guidance of University of Michigan student Madeleine Lambert, are an integral part of the Jewish Cultural School's Sunday School. They serve as aides in the classroom, and at the same time, are working on social action projects while expanding their knowledge of Jewish culture and history. They are currently studying the different sects within Judaism.

TCLP plans to make breakfast at the Interfaith Hospitality Network's Alpha House of Ann Arbor this winter. Alpha House provides temporary shelter, food and support services for homeless families. The group will then spend time playing with Alpha House children. JCS families who have volunteered at Alpha House in the past have found it to be a rewarding experience. For more information about TCLP, email info@jewishculturalsociety.org.

JCS welcomes guests

JCS encourages guests to attend all its programs, including First Friday Shabbat. The JCS calendar can be found online at http://www.jewishculturalsociety.org/. For more information about JCS, email info@jewishculturalsociety.org.

Social Action Committee (SAC)

JCS SAC is sponsoring several educational events and projects this year. On November 17, SAC held a discussion titled "Jewish Settlements in the West Bank." News articles from various sources including *Haaretz*, the *Jerusalem Post*, *Arutz Sheva*, and *Tikkun* provided the background information from differing points of view. Members expressed a wide range of opinions about the current situation.

In the coming months, other aspects of the Middle East conflict will be discussed, with a focus on action to improve communication locally between Jews and Palestinians. SAC is also planning presentations on global warming and the work of the ACLU. Teens from JCS have been an integral part of JCS social action, and are planning to show a film at the Michigan Theater in the spring. ■

This month at Beth Israel Congregation

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN

World Wide Wrap

Sunday, Feb 6, 9:30 a.m.

Beth Israel sponsors locally the "World Wide Wrap," a project of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs. This event encourages Jews around the world to put on tefillin and pray together. Beth Israel will provide extra sets of tefillin and experienced teachers will be available to assist everyone who would like to participate in this important mitzvah.

Beth Israel is known for its post service Polar Bear Tefillin Photo that captures all the tefillin-clad participants in the out-of-doors, regardless of the weather. This photo is posted on the Federation of Jewish Men's Club website as a counterpoint to Kehillat Nitzan from Melbourne Australia which is the first congregation in the world to lay tefillin that morning. Their photo is taken next to a pool in the summer sun.

Following the Shaharit service and photo, a brunch of bagels, lox, and coffee will be served. Some of Beth Israel's religious school students will participate in the morning program as well.

Beth Israel Red Cross Blood Drive

Sunday, February 13, 9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Beth Israel's annual blood drive will be conducted in the Beth Israel Social Hall—with freshly baked cookies and hot chocolate offered to all donors. Giving blood will take about an hour. To sign up online, visit www.givelife.org, click "Donate Blood Now," and fill in the email address, birth date, and the sponsor code, (bic13). The donor will then have to fill out a registration page and click the bottom button to be directed to the Beth Israel Blood drive. Donors can then click the button next to the blood drive where they would like to donate and then make their appointment on the page that will appear. Anyone who has difficulties signing up online, can call Tamar Weaver at 677-1736 who will be glad to assist. Each donor answers a critical need that cannot be supplied in any other way.

Interfaith Perspectives Series

February 4, 7:30 p.m.

Kabbalat Shabbat Service; 8:15 p.m. oneg (dessert snacks) and presentation

The Interfaith Friday Night Lecture Series will continue with a presentation on the Mu-Jew (Muslim Jewish) Alternative Spring Break Experience, presented by university students Rebecca Gutmann and Hasenin Al-khersan, For the past two years, a group of 15 University of Michigan students has joined together to work on a community service project. Two years ago, they traveled to New Orleans and last year a different group spent several days in New York City. Many colleges and universities sponsor "alternative spring break" trips of this kind, but the U-M trip is unique in that the students on the trip are from the Jewish and Muslim communities. The goal of this unique trip is to perform valuable community service while learning about each other's faiths; confronting misconceptions and stereotypes; and discussing the areas of disagreement between communities.

Lunch and Learn

Wednesday, Feb. 2, 9, 16, and 23; Noon–1:15 p.m.

These weekly events take place at the Garfunkel-Schteingart Activity Center at 2010 Washtenaw. During the February sessions, Rabbi Dobruisn and Rabbi Blumenthal will facilitate discussions on issues of current events in the Jewish world and consider their implications for those living in Washtenaw County. Participants are asked to bring a dairy lunch, while beverages and desserts will be provided at no charge.

Archaeology of the Temple Mount

Sundays, March 6, 20, and 27; 8 p.m.

This three-session course will be presented by Jack Love. The class will begin with a virtual tour of today's Temple Mount. After an appreciation of the topography of this part of Jerusalem, the class will start from the Western Wall prayer area and explore south to Robinson's Arch, then north along the underground Western wall tunnels. From the northernmost point the class will examine the northern wall and the installations that have occupied that space such as the Antonia Fortress and the pools that were part of the extensive water supply system. Next, the Temple Mount will be observed from the south, noting the gates and steps that led to the top of the platform (in Herod's day). The first session will conclude with the view from the Mount of Olives and a discussion of can be seen of the Eastern Wall. The second session will consider the mechanics of building the platform and the question of the location of the Temple on the platform. There will be a review of the structures that today grace the platform: not just the Dome of the Rock, but also the Al Aqsa, the smaller domes and the Muslim religious authority (Waqf) installations. In the third session, the layers of history will be peeled away to examine to what extent, if any, one may glimpse the shape of the Temple itself in the days before this magnificent platform was constructed. Is there any realistic hope of reaching back to the time of Solomon?

Jack Love received a bachelors degree in Classical History at University of Wisconsin-Madison, an masters degree from University of California-Berkeley in Near Eastern Languages and Literature and was a doctoral fellow of the Hebrew University (Jerusalem) and Hebrew Union College (Cincinnati). He managed the Department of Hebrew at Lehrhaus Judaica and taught Classical Hebrew in Berkeley, San Francisco, and Stanford, as part of the Lehrhaus program. He is the author of *Understanding Classical Hebrew: A Simplified Approach*. Since his arrival in Michigan in 1989, in addition to an administrative career with the University of Michigan, Love has been a principle teacher of adult Jewish education at Kehillat Israel, Lansing.

Beth Israel Trivia Night 2011 winning team: Amy Hamermesh, Lisa Bernstein, Peretz Hirshbein, Zachary Bernstein, Jeff Bernstein, Abigail Hirshbein, David Hamermesh, Miriam Hamermesh, Mira Sussman, and Doron Yitzchaki.

Men's Club Super Bowl Party

Sunday, February 6, 6 p.m.

Participants will enjoy a wide screen experience in Beth Israel's Social Hall, along with a full spread of deli meats, chili (both meat and vegetarian), chips, potato salad, and snacks. The charge for the event is $15 per person to cover food. Everyone ages 13 and up is welcome. To RSVP, email Shelley Aronson at robin@firstriver.com.

BICs annual free winter concert–Zamir Chorale of Metropolitan Detroit

Saturday, February 12, at 8:30 p.m.

The second annual free winter concert features a performance by the Zamir Chorale of Metropolitan Detroit. The concert will be followed by an afterglow with the performers. Zamir, the Hebrew word for nightingale, is a most appropriate name for Metropolitan Detroit's premier independent Jewish choir. The Zamir Chorale of Metropolitan Detroit was founded in 1994 with the help of a grant from the Max M. Fisher Jewish Community Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit. The Zamir Chorale provides a unique opportunity for people of all traditions to come together in song and fellowship. This performance, geared to listeners of all ages, is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Beth Israel Program Director Jacob Kander at 665-9897 or programs@bethisrael-aa.org.

Tot Shabbat

February 12 and 26, 11:15 a.m.–noon

Tot Shabbat is a Saturday morning service for parents and their children 2–5 years old that includes songs, stories, and prayers. This program is run by Peretz Hirshbein (JCC Early Childhood assistant director) on the second Saturday of each month and Jessica Kander (an experienced pre-school teacher) on the fourth Saturday of each month. Preschool-sized tables are set up for the regular Kiddush so that families may easily attend with their children following Tot Shabbat. There is no charge for this bi-monthly program.

Mini-Minyan for Children in K–2nd Grades

Saturday February 12, 11 a.m.

Offered on the second Saturday morning of each month, the Mini-Minyan is a program that serves as a bridge between Tot Shabbat, which is aimed at preschool children and their parents, and Kehillat Shabbat, which is intended for 3rd – 5th graders. Mini-Minyan features many of the same songs and stories enjoyed during Tot Shabbat, while also offering the chance for children to learn and explore many of the Shabbat morning prayers through age appropriate activities. The Mini-Minyan service will be led by program director Jacob Kander with special games and activities led by a team of parent volunteers.

Kehilat Shabbat and Moadon

February 12, 11 a.m.

This Saturday morning program for K–5th graders led by Gabe Pachter, will take place this month on February 13 and will include a morning service to celebrate, schmooze and learn. Moadon, a gathering place for elementary school aged children, starts at 10 a.m. every Saturday, and provides a Junior Congregation experience at 11 a.m. on weeks where there is no Kehillat Shabbat.

Child/Parent room

Saturdays, 9:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Parents have the use of Room 14 every Saturday morning during services. The room is stocked with toys. The Kiddush following services has kid-sized tables and chairs so that even the littlest ones may participate in the Kiddush reception.

General community is always welcome

All of Beth Israel's events, plus all educational offerings are open to the general community, often at no cost. For further information, call 665-9897 or visit www.bethisrael-aa.org. ■

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A morning at preschool at the JCC Early Childhood Center

Peretz Hirshbein, special to the WJN

It is 8:45 a.m. on a Tuesday morning in early January, and in the JCC Early Childhood Center's Kangaroo room, two four-year-old boys sit at a table collaborating on a complicated structure, while teacher, Natalie Wiesend, sits and reads with three children. A few more Kangaroo children arrive; soon it will be Greeting Time, when the class will gather to talk about the day. Next door, at 9 a.m., the Giraffe Room begins their Greeting Time.

Teacher Natalie Wiesend reads with three children in the Kangaroo room

With the final words of their greeting song – "Shalom, shalom, let's have fun!" still hanging in the air, the children turn their attention to the whiteboard held by teacher Katy Czarnecki. "Who wants to tell us about today's messages?" Hands go up as children tell Katy that "it's Tuesday" and "we're singing with Wendy today!" Across the hall in the Frog Room, children introduced themselves to a student who was new to the classroom.

As Greeting Time ended, children scattered to large tables for Small Group Time. In the Kangaroo Room, children in Nancy Witter's group were wielding rolling pins as they flattened slices of bread to make roll-up sandwiches. Outside the Giraffe Room, Michelle Paris' group was gathered around a large piece of butcher paper. Using toy cars and trays of different colored paint, children worked on mixing colors as they made designs using the car wheels. In the Frog Room, teacher Julie Bass and her small group read a book about dinosaurs as they continued their ongoing exploration of dinosaurs. Across the room Julie's co-teacher Tonya Backstrom worked with her small group on how to represent clouds using different materials—crayons, white paint, and white paper—as a follow-up to a reading of *It Looked Like Spilt Milk*.

At snack time in the Kangaroo Room, a discussion broke out about how to eat your oatmeal. One child insisted to his classmates that "You can't mix your chocolate chips into your oatmeal!" His declaration was met with cries of "yes you can!" and "Look – the chips melt when you mix them in!" The consensus was that you could choose to mix or not mix. As snack time came to a close in the Giraffe Room, it was time for the children to make their plans for Work Time. At Katy's small group table each child took a turn "calling" Katy on a cell phone so that they could talk about what they wanted to do with their time. Plans in each classroom ranged from building a boat with blocks, to playing hopscotch, to dressing up and pretending to be a veterinarian, to reading with a teacher, to drawing a picture with crayons.

As Work Time got into full swing, children's plans became intertwined, creating richer experiences. A boy who planned to play with animals and the girl who wanted to play veterinarian collaborated as they took care of a "sick" tiger. The hopscotch player recruited other children to her game. The boat builder was joined by others who brought tools to use and ideas of how the boat should look. The girl who planned to draw, ended up creating an elaborate Chanukah card for her parents. (Belated? Extremely early?) Two children who planned to build a train were joined by two more children who helped make the track longer and more elaborate. Teachers participated in these scenarios, taking on roles assigned by the children and following the themes in their play. In each room, one teacher was almost constantly surrounded by children supplying a seemingly endless series of books to read. In another, two children who were getting to know a new manipulative material received support from a teacher who helped them discover how pieces could fit together.

Soon, five-minute warnings that cleanup time was coming were heard. In one room, one of the teachers left the room to run an "errand," providing an opportunity for the ever-popular cleanup game, "surprise the teacher." Could the children clean up before the teacher came back? Materials were put away quickly, as every shelf and bin is labeled with pictures and words. After everything was put away, the lights were turned off, and the children hid, silently. "Here she comes!" another teacher whispered. "Where did everyone go?" wondered the returning teacher. The class yelled, "Surprise !"

After cleanup in each classroom, the children returned to their tables to reflect on what they had accomplished during Work Time. At Natalie's table children added blocks to the "Recall tower" as they recounted their activities, telling Natalie and their classmates about the materials they used, the structures they built, and the people they worked with. Soon, everyone lined up to go to their weekly music time, Hootenanny! Other mornings might mean gym class or Israeli dancing, or Torah stories, but on Tuesdays for the past 20 years, Wendy Lawrence has been singing with the children of the ECC. Soon all three preschool classrooms were singing *Puff the Magic Dragon* and *She'll be Coming Round the Mountain*.

After Hootenanny the children rushed back to their classrooms to put on all of their winter gear so that they could play in the snow. Outside, children slid down snow-covered slides, and rode sleds down the small hill on the playground. Teachers pulled other sleds full of children around the space. Red-cheeked and hungry, the children trooped back inside, stripped off snow pants and boots, and ate lunch. The morning was over ■.

Open enrollment for the JCC Early Childhood Center will begin in mid-March. For more information about the ECC, and the rest of its programs, call 971-0990, email Noreen DeYoung at noreendeyoung@jccfed.org or Peretz Hirshbein at peretzhirshbein@jccfed.org.

In the Kangaroo room, Ruthann Peterson makes a belated/really early Chanukah card for her parents

Amani Dworkin and Ava Aisner provide veterinary care to a sick tiger in the Giraffe room

JCC/ECC to hold reunion February 13

Peretz Hirshbein, special to the WJN

On Sunday, February 13, from 1–3 p.m., alumni of the Jewish Community Center's Early Childhood Center and their families are invited to the ECC reunion. The gathering will afford participants the chance to remember their time at preschool, check out old class pictures, and catch up with old friends. The afternoon will include a concert by Beverly Meyer aka The Music Lady, and a brownie a la mode bar.

The ECC reunion is the brainchild of Danielle Sears, a longtime teacher at the ECC. As part of her degree completion program, Sears needed to plan and execute a family program. As she thought about the kind of program she wanted to create, she reflected that, "I've been here for going on eight years in February and I wanted to be able to give something back. I really love and enjoy working here and a reunion gives past families a chance to come back to reconnect with their ECC friends and see how they have been doing over the years."

Sears approached ECC Director Noreen DeYoung, who was very excited about the idea. "I know that so many of our former families keep in touch; my own daughter's honor attendant at her wedding was her best friend from preschool, But we've never had a reunion before. I hope that people are able to re-kindle old friendships, and recall fond memories of early childhood. I look forward to reconnecting with families that have come through our program."

Tickets for the reunion are $5/person in advance and $8 at the door. For more information, call the JCC at 971-0990 or email reunion@jccfed.org. ■

Jewish camp–the secret to the future

Noah Gallagher, special to the WJN

CYJ is great because you can build a family and have friends forever—from all over the Midwest!" said Miriam Hamermesh, a 12 year-old Ann Arbor native. In November, I watched as Miriam and her friend Abigail sat in front of CYJ's end-of-session slide show and named each and every camper

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as the pictures flickered by. That sense of family—a place where everyone knows each other's name—sets Jewish camps apart.

Over the last ten years there appears to be a marked shift in thought about Jewish camping and its impact on young people. Whereas fundraising for camp was once the job of the community of parents and alumni of a particular camp, nowadays individuals and foundations are dedicating time and money to the cause of Jewish camp. People seem to be discovering what many of us have known for some time: sending your child to camp might just be the best thing you can do for them Jewishly.

Jerry Silverman, former CEO of the Foundation for Jewish Camp, has said: "There's a realization that Jewish camping offers a wonderful portal for children to experience a 24/7 Jewish environment where they can live Judaism as fun. This special and intimate setting allows children to create, and funders are seeing that camp is a tremendous investment opportunity." Under Jerry Silverman's leadership, the Foundation for Jewish Camp began partnering with communities all over the US to offer first-time campers substantial grants towards tuition at Jewish camp.

Harold Grinspoon is one of the principal funders of Jewish Camp experiences. The Grinspoon Foundation currently works with more than 70 camps, including Camp Young Judaea Midwest, helping develop fundraising campaigns and strong leadership. Grinspoon is fueled by the belief that "The more you can gather Jewish kids around a campfire for a Jewish experience, the more you can keep the tribe together." The Grinspoon Institute for Jewish Philanthropy also offers first-time camper grants to participants in PJ Library, an early childhood reading program that provides free books with Jewish themes to families.

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Parents of campers know this well: "I send my kids to CYJ because at CYJ Jewish is fun. It's all around, not something you have to do that's different from all your friends, just part of the fabric of every day," said Amy Hamermesh, president of CYJ's board of directors and a parent of two campers. "At the same time, it's still summer camp—free time and swimming…but free time is called *chofesh* and swimming is *s'chiyah*…they come home and poof—more Hebrew and Jewish friends for life."

Camp is a place to learn powerful lessons in community, character-building, skill development, and healthy living. Jewish camp creates life-long friendships and strong bonds to Israel, Judaism and the Jewish community. Camp accomplishes this in a way that can't be achieved elsewhere. By taking children out of an environment in which they are bombarded with messages about how to act, how to look and what's cool, camp gives kids the tools to choose their own path.

Camp removes the distractions of homework, television, video games and the internet. As soon as they step off the bus, campers at CYJ Midwest are in an environment where Hebrew is spoken freely, Israeli dancing is cool and 200 young people gather as a community on Friday night to welcome Shabbat with prayer and song. When Shabbat ends at CYJ, the entire camp explodes onto the dance floor for Israeli dancing.

We are still waiting for the definitive study linking a Jewish camp experience to Jewish involvement later in life, including marrying Jewish, raising Jewish children, synagogue involvement or Israel advocacy on campus.

While we are waiting for the study, I can tell you about some first-hand experience I have with hundreds of young adults who are products of the Young Judaea camping experience.

The staff at Camp Young Judaea Midwest consists primarily of young men and women who have spent many summers at Young Judaea camps. They come to camp, some in spite of parents' protests that they "get a real job."

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I assure you, it doesn't get more real than working at CYJ Midwest.

If you ask our staff members why they came back to work at camp, they will usually answer you the same way: "Because I wanted to give something back."

This statement is the recognition that they would not be who they are today without their camp experience. They are proud, committed Jews and Zionists. They are active on their campuses—on behalf of Israel, yes—but more often than not, these are also the young men and women working to raise awareness of injustices worldwide.

When put in front of campers, these young adults become *dugmaot ishiot*—personal examples—to campers. These young men and women are "giving back" just by being who they are. A camp counselor is not a parent, not a teacher and not an older sibling, but is, in many ways, a combination of the three. They may be the most accessible Jewish role models children will have. For 8-16 year olds at camp, they are coolness defined.

And how is cool defined at camp? Cool is having a Hebrew vocabulary. Cool is loving Israel and having been there. Cool is singing Hebrew songs and dancing to Israeli music. Cool is knowing the entire *Birkat Hamazon* by heart. Cool is being Jewish and proud of it.

Sending kids to Jewish camp is not only an investment in their future, it is an investment in the future of the Jewish people. Just ask some of the hundreds of couples who met at Jewish camp. Then ask them what their kids do during the summer—you can bet they go to Jewish camp. Anyone want to guess where their grandkids are likely to be each summer?

Jewish camp may be the secret to the future of the Jewish people. It shouldn't be such a secret! ■

Noah Gallagher is director of Camp Young Judaea Midwest, in Waupaca, Wisconsin.

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JEWISH CAMPING

Ann Arbor campers at Camp Young Judaea
1 - Miriam Hamermesh, far left
2 - Mira Strauss, second from right
3 - Jonathan Hamermesh, far left
4 - Rephael Berkooz, far left

Camp Gan Israel
5. Pioneers at Cedar Point
6. Pioneers full of smiles

Camp Keshet
7. Sarah Shriberg and Yahli Pederson walk to the library during Camp Keshet.
8. Shai Weisberg and Kinga Jung "camp out" at Camp Keshet

Camp Tavor
9. Campers at Tavor sing a song to welcome Shabbat
10. Ann Arbor 6th grader, Kobi Eichner, harvests lettuce at Camp Tavor's organic garden

Camp Rananana
11. Kindergarten group counselors Mira Preston and Sarah Mirsky with CIT Katia Kassof and several campers
12. 2010 4th-5th grade counselor Erica Riba with her campers

Camp OSRUI
13. Rabbi Levy with TBE campers and staff: Zoe Gutterman (staff), Rachel Lieberman, Eve Zikmund-Fisher, Isaac Ahuvia and Noa Gutterman (staff)

HDS students celebrate the number 36

Dina Shtull, special to the WJN

Hebrew Day School's 36th anniversary offered an opportunity to the students to learn about the significance of the number 36. As part of the school's annual Music Festival held in December, fifth grade students performed a skit for the community on the value of the number. Although they noted that 36 is the number of possible outcomes in the roll of two distinct dice; that there are 36 degrees in the interior angle of each tip of a regular pentagram; and that there are 36 inches in a yard, they also shared the special Jewish significance to the number which unfolded in the skit. "It's an odd number to celebrate," began Arianna Seir. "I know it's an even number, it's just odd," she quipped. "It's all in the Gematria," explained Avi Weingarten. Gematria is alpha-numerics, a system of assigning a numerical value to a Hebrew word or phrase based on the numerical value of each letter. "For example," explained Brayan Zivan, "the Hebrew word *Chai* (meaning life) is composed of two letters which add up to 18: The letter Chet is the 8th letter in the alphabet and the letter Yod is the 10th letter in the alphabet. The Gematria of the word *Chai* has made 18 a meaningful number, and the number 36 doubly significant. The lessons in Gematria continued: "What number is represented by the letter Kaf?" asks Liana Dunietz. "Eleven?" suggested Gabi Levy in the skit, knowing that Kaf is one letter after Yod. "Actually not," explained Liana. "Chaf stands for 20. In Gematria, we begin counting by tens after the letter Yod (and by 100 starting with letter Qof). "What then is the numerical value of the letter Lamed?" she tested her friend. "Thirty!" Gabi answered correctly. "And what then are the Hebrew letters that represent the number 36?" "Lamed Vav," answered Gabi, knowing that the letter vav is the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Moving her head closer to her friend, Liana shared a secret about the significance of Lamed Vav. "Legend has it that there are 36 *Tzadikim Nistarim* in the world, 36 really special people. They say that if the world is bad, God will save it because of these special people. But, they are hidden. We don't know who they are. They don't know who they are. They don't know each other. They are called the *Lamed Vavnicks*." "Maybe I should act like one of them, just in case," mused Gabi.

The skit continued with a conversation between two friends on a basketball team who each want the number 36. Leah (played by Rachel Pacernick) claims the number because the numerical value of the Hebrew letters in her name add up to 36 (lamed:30, aleph:1, heh:5). Her friend Chaim (Grace Kaufer) claims the number because his name in Hebrew is the plural of Chai (2 x 18 = 36). When Leah wins the flipping of a coin, Chaim says, "Let's just play, Leah. Let's not fight." "*Maybe he's a Lamed Vavnick*," wondered Leah about Chaim.

The skit ends with two students (Natan Zekic and Emma Block) talking about the future. "Let's plant a tree for the benefit of our children," says Emma. Natan wonders whether Emma might be a *Lamed Vavnick*.

The students end the program with a dance to the song which has the words "Chai, Chai, Chai!" "May our double-chai school have yet another 18 years," wished the students who planted trees in Israel in honor of the school's anniversary. ■

Hebrew Day Schoolís 36th anniversary will be celebrated in the community on Sunday night, March 13, at 6 p.m., at Four Points by Sheraton. Honorees are Susan and Barry Gross. Reservations can be made by calling the school at 971-4633. Private tours can be arranged by calling the school.

JCC youth programs

Deborah Huerta, special to the WJN

JCC to offer Snow Day programs

The Youth Department of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will once again offer Snow Day programs this winter. On days when the JCC is able to open but Ann Arbor Public Schools are cancelled due to winter weather conditions, a Snow Day program will be offered from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. for students in grades K–5; middle school students may participate as helpers for a reduced fee. Students will enjoy games, crafts, gym time, and fun in the snow (weather permitting).

Snow Day programs are for JCC members only. Registration in advance is not required, but parents will be asked to fill out a registration form and submit payment when they arrive. The cost for each Snow Day is $50; additional siblings and Kids' Konnection & Kids' Club participants receive discounts.

School's Out Program on February 16

The JCC will offer a full day School's Out Day program on February 16 from 8 a.m.–6 p.m. for Ann Arbor Public Schools and other students. The program is for JCC members only in grades K–5; middle school students may also participate as helpers for a reduced fee. The cost for the School's Out Day is $36 for care from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. ($32 for additional siblings) and $10 for Extended Care from 4–6 p.m. Registration and payment are due by Friday, February 11.

February Break program offerings

The JCC will offer February Break Fun Day programs from 8 a.m.–6 p.m. on February 21–24. Each February Break Fun Day will feature a fun field trip or special activity, plus crafts, games, and gym time or outdoor recess. Students may sign up for one or more days. Programming details for each day will be available in early February.

The February Break Fun Day programs are for JCC members ONLY in grades K–5; middle school students are also welcome to participate as helpers for a reduced fee. The cost for each day is $36 for care from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. ($32 for additional siblings) and $10 for Extended Care from 4–6 p.m. Registration and payment are due by Monday, February 14. ■

For registration forms or more information about JCC youth programs, visit www.jccannarbor.org or contact Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990.

Teens at the JCC

Deborah Huerta, special to the WJN

Mitzvahs & Munchies event

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor has started a series of Mitzvahs & Munchies events for high school students. Each event features a combination of community service/mitzvah projects, social activities, and munchies or dinner.

The most recent Mitzvahs & Munchies event was held on Saturday, November 20, and was a great success. Seventeen teens met at Zap Zone to enjoy laser tag, pizza, and a fun mitzvah project involving making fleece scarves to donate to Ozone House. Participants also started brainstorming ideas for the next Mitzvahs & Munchies event, which will be held in early February.

Details for the February event are still being finalized; contact Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990 to find out more or to get involved in planning these events.

JCC Seeks Teen Athletes for 2011 JCC Maccabi Games

Each summer the JCC sends a team of athletes to the JCC Maccabi Games, an Olympic-style sporting competition that incorporates community service and social activities to combine for an unforgettable experience for Jewish teens.

This summer, Ann Arbor athletes will have the option to attend one of two different sites. At the JCC Maccabi Games in Springfield, Massachusetts, from August 14–19, teens will be able to compete in girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, girls volleyball, track and field, swimming, bowling, golf, tennis, and table tennis. Teens must be 13–16 years old as of July 31, 2011.

Ann Arbor athletes may also choose to participate in the JCC Maccabi Games in Israel from July 21–August 5, 2011. The experience will include a week of touring Israel, a weekend home hospitality stay, and a week of sports competition. Teens will be able to compete in basketball, soccer, swimming, table tennis, tennis, dance, and girls volleyball. Teens must be 14–17 years old as of July 31, 2011.

Athletes of all abilities are welcome to participate, and scholarship assistance is available for qualifying families. A limited number of spots are available, so interested families are encouraged to contact Deborah Huerta as soon as possible, at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990. ■

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Camp Gan Israel's bar mitzvah year

Brynie Stiefel, special to the WJN

Thirteen years of fun. Seven hundred campers. And it's only the beginning.

As Camp Gan Israel celebrates its "coming of age," and welcomes new campers to enroll for its "bar mitzvah" year, it would not be difficult for camp directors to sit back and mark 13 years of outstanding growth. "What started as a small camp with 28 campers now has an enrolment of 100 children," explains Shternie Zwiebel, camp director. "I believe it is the liveliness, the welcoming Jewish atmosphere that really brings out the best in each child, making for a lot of campers who return year after year."

But despite the camp's obvious popularity, for the camp director, there's no time to sit still. "The program is in a constant state of evolvement," says Zwiebel."Every year we keep the good stuff that makes the CGI experience unique, and look for ways to provide new opportunities and offer more to our campers." For Zwiebel, that means putting a full year's work into developing a program that is at once educational and enough fun that none of the kids realize it.

Bunk Jewish Jamaica, Summer 2010

This has led her to develop a system of elective activities, with campers participating in an activity of their choice three times a week. "We offer a wide range of activities to choose from, such as martial arts, dance, chess, super science, gymnastics or art. It gives children a chance to do something they already love in an area they feel they are successful in, or branch out and try something new." The program is centered on each camper as an individual, providing opportunities to strengthen his or her sense of self, and in this way provide a platform to create healthy peer interactions and friendships to last a life-time.

Another important element in Camp Gan Israel's success is its excellent sports' program, with children training with professional coaches three times a week, in addition to the regular swimming schedule. Filling in the gaps in this action packed program are bi-weekly field trips to amusement parks, ice-skating, and camping trips, to name just a few. "We do it all," Zwiebel comments with a smile, "There's always something new on the agenda." But the most important aspect in the success of Camp Gan Israel, she contends, is the quality staff she recruits from all over the USA, "They are what make our camp. A responsible, caring and attentive counselor is what makes camp a place where a child feels secure enough to show his or her true self."

Registration for Summer 2011 (June 27–August 12) opens on February 1. Camp hours are Monday to Friday from 9 a.m.–3:45 p.m., with parents offered a variety of before- and after-care options. Understanding the need to spend family time during the summer break, CGI offers parents a choice of the number of days they would like their child to attend, even offering a half-day option for 4- and 5-year-olds. Camp will once again be located on the Clonlara School campus. ■

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Camp Raanana celebrates 40th anniversary

Deborah Huerta, special to the WJN

Camp Raanana, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's outdoor summer day camp, is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Since the camp's founding in 1971, thousands of local children have formed strong friendships, built Jewish connections, and created lasting memories at Camp Raanana. The camp was originally run under the auspices of the Jewish Community Council, and officially became part of the Jewish Community Center in the mid-1980s.

In its early years, Camp Raanana offered six weeks of camp each summer and served children in first through sixth grade. The camp proved so successful that families soon clamored for additional weeks of camp and programs for older campers. As a result, Camp Raanana now offers nine weeks of camp each summer and provides programs for children entering kindergarten through eighth grade, including weekly specialty offerings for grades 3–5 and a Pioneer Adventure Program for grades 6–8. The camp's Counselor-in-Training and Junior Counselor programs also provide exceptional summer experiences for high school students.

The camp has been based at various locations during the past 40 years, including sites in Brighton, Chelsea, and Ann Arbor. In 1996, Camp Raanana moved to its current location at Independence Lake County Park. This beautiful, private site is the perfect place for campers to engage in nature exploration, work on their swimming skills through Red Cross certified lessons, and experience the joys of the outdoors. Daily busing is provided from the JCC to the camp site, and the facility includes a pavilion, swimming beach, playgrounds, volleyball courts, sports fields, and access to nature trails, boating and fishing areas, disc golf courses, and a Spray Zone.

Campers playing in a tent in the early 1990s

In addition to emphasizing outdoor educational experiences, Camp Raanana has always been committed to providing dynamic Jewish programming for campers. Camp-wide Shabbat celebrations and thematic explorations of Jewish and Israeli topics have been an integral part of Camp Raanana since its early days. In 2002, the camp added a special new program offering: the annual visit and performance by the Israel Scouts Friendship Caravan. For the past nine years, this group of talented Israeli teenagers has visited camp for a day to engage the campers with fun activities, and then delighted the entire community with an evening performance at the JCC.

Campers ready to swim at Independence Lake in 1998

In its 40 years of existence, Camp Raanana has grown to serve over 160 campers each summer and has truly become part of the Ann Arbor Jewish community. Many of the camp staff members are former Camp Raanana campers, which inspires even the youngest campers to dream of one day becoming counselors themselves. For 2011, the camp staff is planning a variety of activities to celebrate Camp Raanana's 40th anniversary, including time capsule projects, fun weekly themes, more all-camp activities, and exciting guest visitors.

The camp dates for summer 2011 are June 20–August 19, and an additional Summer Fun Days program from August 22–26 will also be offered through the JCC. Camp registration opens in early February and brochures will be available at the JCC and at www.CampRaanana.com. For more information, visit the website or contact camp director Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990. Individuals who wish to share pictures, stories, or information about the early days of Camp Raanana are also encouraged to contact the camp director. ■

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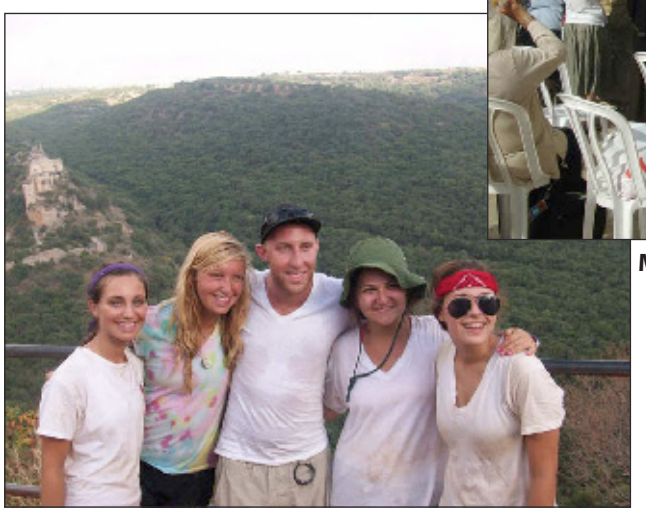
Lessons learned: Israel

Mara Abramson, special to the WJN

Cats are the squirrels of Israel. That was the first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the Tel Aviv airport on July 1, 2010. My group and I boarded a bus to travel to the hostel where we were to spend our first evening on Young Judaea's Machon summer program in Israel. I don't generally like car or bus rides—I get bored with the scenery, and I'd rather be somewhere else. I did not have that experience in Israel; everything about the country is beautiful. On our many bus rides, sometimes it was even hard for me to pay attention to the great friends around me, because I was so riveted by the incredible scenery.



Mara and friends at a mountain overlook

The most beautiful sight I saw was at Kibbutz Ketura, a kibbutz founded by Young Judaeans in 1973. The kibbutz is in the heart of the Arava desert, surrounded by mountains and rocks, and overlooks the country of Jordan. I cannot even express how spectacular the sunset was.

Mara with a friend at the Kotel

However, I realized that not everything in Israel is so beautiful and put together. With my program, we spent a lot of time and put a great deal of emphasis on learning about the Arab-Israeli conflict and thinking of ways to coexist. Yet, I noticed that there is another great conflict in Israel—a conflict that is not spoken of by many and appears to go unnoticed—the conflict between different sects of Jews. As a child at the Hebrew Day School, I learned a fair amount about Israel and through all my studies, I came to the conclusion that Israel is a place where all Jews can come and live together peacefully. Unfortunately, this is not what I saw. The more religious Jews seemed to look down on the secular ones for not being observant, and the secular ones felt attacked by this. I never realized this was such an issue, because in my life, I have managed to peacefully co-exist with my sister, who is Chassidic, and other extremely religious Jews, just as she and her friends have learned to coexist and accept my family and our beliefs and practices.

All summer my bus traveled with a medic/guard, Alon, a young 23-year-old just out of the army. I was so shocked when I heard him utter the words, "I hate the Chassids" as we walked towards the Kotel. This really stuck with me for two reasons: 1. It didn't seem right for me to have the ugliness of his distasteful words and the beautiful experience of my first time praying at the Kotel to be in any way related; and 2. This was when I truly realized how ridiculous this hatred amongst my own people is. What's the point in dividing a minority? Rabbi Akiva once said, "Love your fellow as yourself." This should be simple—similar to the saying I heard all through childhood, "Treat other people as you'd like to be treated." It's blatantly obvious that people do not like to be treated with disrespect. I can't understand why grown adults can't seem to act in the way they teach their children to act.

In Israel I did more than just see the sights I've heard about and taste the foods I've only had the American versions of. I learned about what it means to truly love *Eretz Yisroel* and be a Zionist, even if I don't agree with everything that's going on with the country and its people. In addition to coming home with a killer tan (while still wearing SPF 30!) and experiencing the most delicious mangoes I have ever eaten, I've also come back to America more aware, more conscious, and more concerned about Israel and her people. I'm so grateful to the Ann Arbor Jewish community—specifically, the Lichter family—for making this trip a reality for me. I have truly come back a more complete person. ■

Mara Abramson is a senior at Pioneer High School and was one of the two recipients of the 2010 Susan L. Lichter Memorial Endowed Israel Scholarship. Mara was on Young Judaeaís Machon summer program.

Mara poses with a camel

My summer in Israel

Maia Volk, special to the WJN

I will never forget my sixteenth birthday. I woke up at three in the morning to climb Masada with my closest friends. We reached the top just in time to catch the most beautiful sunrise I had ever seen painted across the sky. This was one of several life-changing moments I experienced this summer, during a five-week program with Habonim Dror youth movement called MBI (Machaneh Bonim Israel). It was definitely the best summer of my life. I got to travel through all the places I had only learned about, experience the culture first hand, establish a stronger connection to Habonim Dror, meet my best friends in the world, and laid out the groundwork for my future in the Jewish community.

I got to see places all over Israel; we went to the Golan Heights, the Galil, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and the Negev. One of the most memorable experiences was early on in the trip: we participated in an event called the Rafsodia: crossing the Kinneret on rafts. We split up into our *kvutzot* (groups) and worked together to build a raft by hand to sail across the Kineret (Sea of Galilee). The entire project took two days. Sailing across the Kineret in a raft I had built with my best friends was such an amazing feeling.

After the Rafsodia we started our touring of Israel. We got a first hand look at Israeli culture when we went to the Shuk HaCarmel, the market, in Tel Aviv. The *shuk* is such an exciting environment; we were immersed in the art, language, people, and food of Israel all at once.

Maia with her *kvutza* the night they received their *chultzot*

During MBI I learned a lot about Zionism, Judaism, and Habonim Dror. At least once a day we would have *peulot*; discussion-based activities run by our *madrachim* (counselors/guides). These *peulot* took place within our *kvutzot* of about twenty kids. They were good opportunities to discuss the issues affecting Israel and the Jewish community. The open and easy atmosphere, in which everyone was eager to learn, made us feel comfortable to express opinions and ideologies during the *peulot*. This created an environment where we both learn from our peers as well as teach them. Each person would leave every *peulah* knowing more then they did before and understanding the many different viewpoints of each issue we discussed.

As a camper at Camp Tavor, I saw my *madrachim* wearing blue shirts with read strings called *chultzot*. Having a *chultza* represents being a member and a leader in Habonim Dror. The summer on MBI is the first year we are considered as members in the movement and that's when we receive our *chultzot* during a very special ceremony. This took place on a Saturday night; we had just finished Havdalah and were brought together in Sde' Boker. None of us knew we were getting our *chultzot* that night. We gathered around and listened quietly as six kids on MBI spoke about what the *chultzah* means to them. Then the *madrachim* called the kids up by their *kvutzot* and revealed our *chultzot* to us.

continued on next page

Toward defending Israel, mainstream U.S. Jewish groups critique it

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Enmeshed in the battle against Israel's delegitimization, mainstream American Jewish organizations are embracing a strategy of acknowledging what's wrong about Israel as a way of getting across what's right about the nation.

The strategy is hardly fresh—the New Israel Fund claims it has been doing this for years. But the recent outspokenness of advocates of the approach reflects concerns among U.S. Jewish establishment organizations that defending Israel in the public arena will not resonate without credibly addressing what some characterize as the deterioration of Israel's civil society.

The American Jewish Committee and the Union for Reform Judaism have delivered broadsides in recent days against recent Israeli government initiatives targeting nongovernmental groups in Israel that monitor human rights. Last week, the Knesset approved in a preliminary reading a bill that would investigate the funding sources of nongovernmental groups that monitor and criticize the Israeli army.

"The Knesset's action today contravenes the democratic principles that are Israel's greatest strength," AJC Executive Director David Harris said after Israel's parliament voted Jan. 5 to investigate human rights groups. "Israel's vibrant democracy not only can survive criticism, but it also thrives and is improved by it."

Echoing demands from Israel's left, the AJC and the Reform body instead called for across-the-board transparency in Israel.In its statement the Reform movement suggested that such actions make it more difficult to defend Israel in other forums."The recent initiative undermines Israel's place in the global community and is a source of concern to the Jewish community throughout the world and to Israel's friends everywhere," the statement said.

That was a theme picked up by the Anti-Defamation League, which in a statement posted on its website did not directly address the proposed Knesset law but expressed concerns about the "highly disturbing trend" of "Israeli intolerance."

"Inflammatory statements have a negative impact on attitudes toward Israel around the world, even in friendly countries like the U.S.," the ADL statement said. "More important, however, is the impact they have within Israel, undermining the democratic fiber, creating a mean-spiritedness in society and enlarging already significant communal rifts."

The significance of such statements was in their bearers—mainstream American Jewish organizations, which are more accustomed to slamming Israel's critics. In the past, these groups have targeted manifestations of bigotry by marginal Israeli groups, Israeli government discrimination against non-Orthodox religious streams and, in some cases, remarks by Israeli officials about the country's Arab citizens.

What's new is the concern by U.S. Jewish groups that discrimination and a diminishing of democratic values is becoming mainstream in Israel.

These American Jewish groups remain dedicated to defending Israel. Indeed, representatives of the same groups will attend conferences in Miami later this month aimed at combating boycotts and delegitimization of Israel.

But they are no longer holding back on criticizing Israel—criticism they view as constructive.

"There are things that Israel can and should do to make it a better country," said William Daroff, the Washington director of Jewish Federations of North America.

"Diaspora Jewry has an obligation to stand up. People should not be hasbara agents," he said, using the term for public relations.

A spokeswoman for the New Israel Fund, Naomi Paiss, said it's about time.

"For a long time, there was probably the misconception that supporting Israel meant enabling bad behavior," she said. "It's becoming clear that supporting Israel means calling it to account when its most anti-democratic trends cannot be ignored."

On Sunday in Washington, a slate of local representatives from national Jewish organizations—including pro-Israel stalwarts such as B'nai B'rith International and the Orthodox Union—joined Israel's embassy in sponsoring a day's discussion on "challenges and opportunities" for Arab citizens of Israel.

Noam Katz, a public diplomacy officer at the embassy, launched the proceedings with what participants said was a candid assessment of the discrimination still facing Israeli Arabs. That helped those in the audience who otherwise may have felt the reflex to protest criticism of Israel to listen and contribute, said Rabbi Sid Schwartz, who helped organize the conference.

Schwartz, also the founder of Panim: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values, said the event, which included Israeli-Arab activists, helped convey a sense that this was an area that American Jews could influence.

"If American Jews start to take note of this issue, we can have more impact on policy in Israel than we can have on the peace process," he said, suggesting that peacemaking is subject to vicissitudes beyond the reach of American Jews.

Anne Clemons, a local community activist who is active with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, among other groups, said she helped organize the event in part to push back against the delegitimization of Israel.

"I felt the community would benefit, the young generation and the press would benefit from learning what Israel was doing to help its Arab citizens," she said.

Clemons said she believes the American Jewish community also has a responsibility to raise the issue with Israel's leaders.

"The American Jewish community is supportive, but when we see there are issues that may need changing, we bring it up with the leaders within the Israeli government," she said.

Not everyone is on board: The Zionist Organization of America issued a statement lauding the crackdown on human rights groups operating in Israel.

"These groups have also shown clearly by their actions that despite their protestations of seeking to serve Israel democracy, they actually seek to bypass Israeli democratic institutions and the Israeli public square by pressing for international pressure on Israel and its democratically elected government by corrupt, dictatorship-dominated bodies like the U.N. Human Rights Council," ZOA said in its statement.

The Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America quoted Im Tirtzu, an Israeli group that opposes human rights groups, as saying the issue at hand was foreign funding for such groups, many of which are Israeli.

"The organizations that call themselves human rights groups actually belong to the extreme left and seek to force their radical values on others through foreign funding," said the Im Tirtzu statement quoted by CAMERA in an e-mail exchange Tuesday with The Washington Post.

The targeted rights' groups say the claim of foreign funding is a red herring, noting that the bill does not pretend to examine groups that receive foreign funding but that back government policies. In any case, the targeted groups say, they are transparent about their funding. ■

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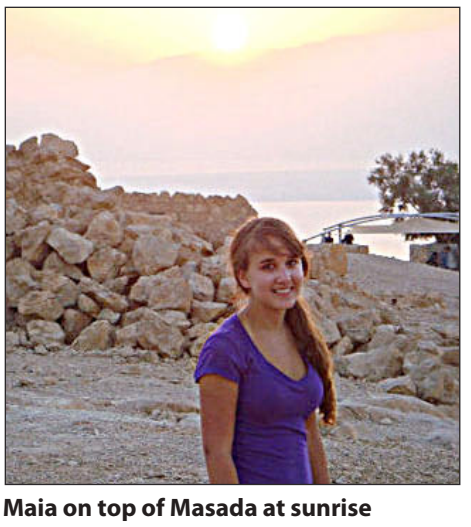


Maia on top of Masada at sunrise

It was a one of the most emotional nights of my life. There I was standing together with my best friends wearing our brand new *chultzot*, along with our *madrachim*. We were all equals in the movement. It was an experience I can only compare to my bat-mitzvah. I had made the transition into the movement.

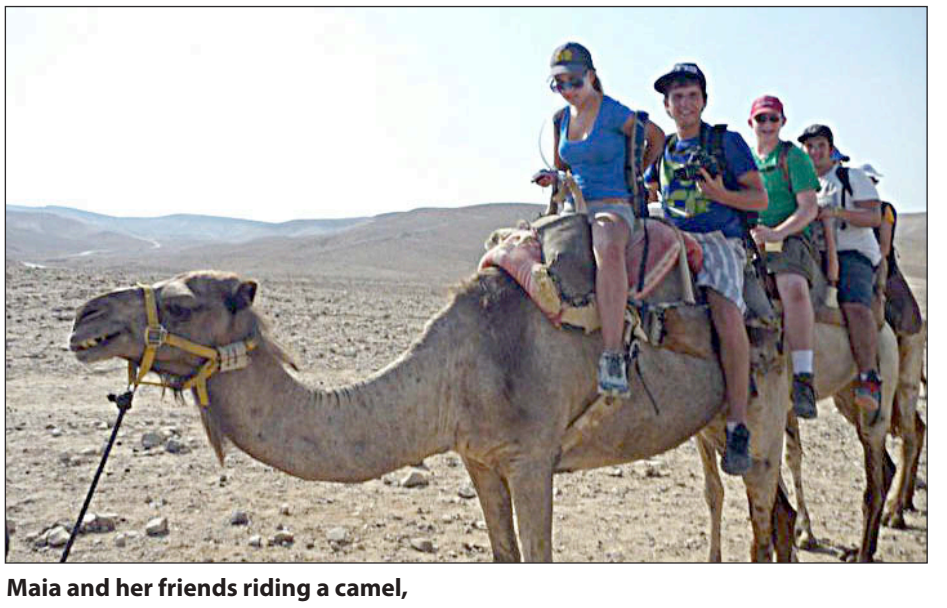
The friends I made this summer on MBI are my best friends the world. I got to interact with kids my age from places like Philadelphia, Vancouver, Boston, Toronto, Los Angeles, and New York, who share the same values as me. It was a really unique opportunity to get to meet people who understand the ideology that Habonim Dror stands for and to be able to talk to them about it. After spending every moment with these people for five weeks I can't imagine my life without them. Since MBI I've been keeping in touch with everyone and my friendships have grown and developed even further in the few months after we returned from the trip.

Over winter break this year, I went to my first movement seminar. I reunited with my MBI friends in Pennsylvania to begin our leadership training and discuss the movement. Ever since I was eleven years old at Machaneh Tavor, the *madrachim* in their *chultzot* would lead my age group in *peulot*, and for the first time I was sitting side by side, on the same level, as the *madrachim* who had guided me as a *chanicha* (camper). It motivated me to seriously think about and take control over my future not just in Habonim, but in my entire Jewish community. I learned so much throughout winter seminar and strengthened my connection to Israel and Habonim Dror.

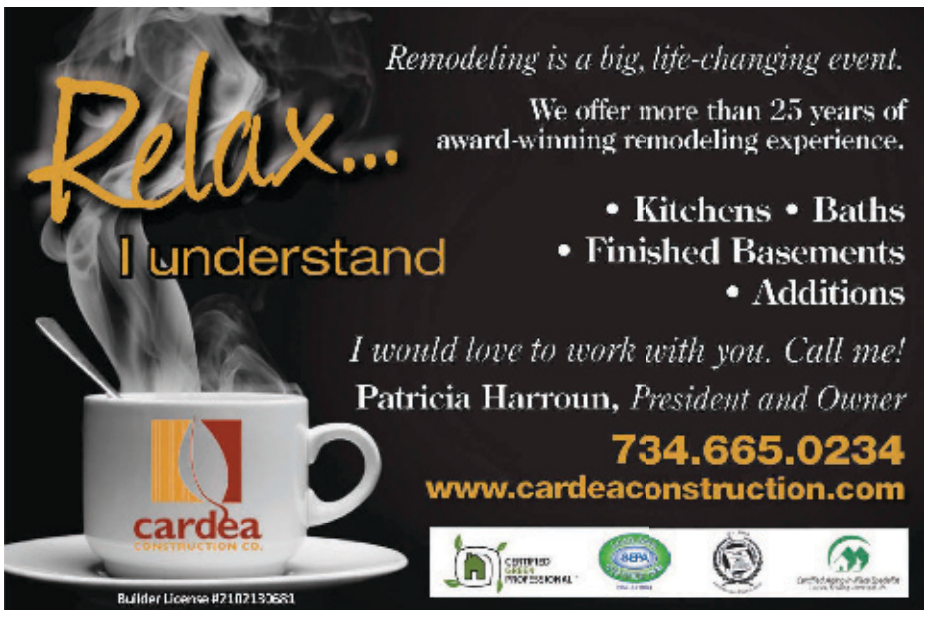
My experiences in Israel opened up the door to so many other things I do to benefit the Jewish community. This summer I'm going to participate in a leadership program at my camp, Machaneh Tavor, called Madatz. Taking part in this program means that my time as a *chanicha* at Tavor is over and that I have started to take on the role of a *madricha*, and teach kids about Israel and Habonim Dror. I'm also starting to seriously think about taking a gap year in Israel on another Habonim Dror Program called Workshop. What MBI showed me is that my involvement in the Jewish community at this point in time is only the beginning of things I could do to learn more about Israel, and that I'm ready to start being a leader.

Going on MBI this summer was the best decision I have ever made. I learned so much about my values, identity, and ideology. It motivated me to become more involved in my Jewish community and think more about my future in Habonim Dror. The lasting friendships I made this summer are my best friends in the world; they really understand me and support me when I need motivation. I am so grateful I got to experience Israel first hand. ■

Maia Volk is a junior at Community High School and was one of the two recipients of the 2010 Susan L. Lichter Memorial Endowed Israel Scholarship. She was on Habonim Drorís MBI summer



Maia and her friends riding a camel,



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After fire, what types of trees are best suited for Israel?

By Dina Kraft

TEL AVIV (JTA)—From leafy eucalyptus trees lapping the shores of the Sea of Galilee to date palms in the desert to pine and oak trees in the North—many of which were destroyed in the Carmel's forest fire in December of 2010—Israel as always, celebrated trees on Tu B'Shevat.

The holiday, which for centuries was a rather obscure festival mentioned in the Mishnah as the new year for trees, was revived by the early Zionists as part of their back-to-the-land ethos. It's now a highlight of the Israeli national calendar, with tens of thousands of Israelis, most of them schoolchildren, pouring out across the country to plant saplings in celebration of the Jewish Arbor Day. This year's observance took place on January 20.

But this year, in wake of the Carmel Forest fire that killed 44 and consumed some 5 million trees and 12,000 acres of land, a growing understanding has taken root that mass replanting of trees is not the way to go. At least not right now.

"Planting is still important, but in many cases we have to make a kind of change in our consciousness," said Yisrael Tauber, director of forest management for the Jewish National Fund-Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael. "It's not just planting, but also natural regeneration of forests, and the managing of that natural regeneration that is key."

The strategy after the fire has cast a spotlight on Israel's longtime rush to make the Holy Land green, which for decades was embraced as Gospel (or, more accurately, Torah from Sinai) by both Diaspora and Israeli Jews. The question now is not how fast trees can be planted but whether and which trees should go in the ground, and how Israel should plan its ecological future.

"Now we are in a second, new phase," he noted. "We are now building sustainable forestry after these pioneering pines did a wonderful job for the first generation."

With a dry climate similar to that of California or Spain, Israel is a natural home for relatively short trees that need little water. Some, like acacias, can go for months without even a drop.

For centuries the area was covered in a patchwork of squat, dense low-lying forest, especially in the native woodland areas of the Carmel, Galilee and the Judean hills. But by the time the early Zionist settlers arrived, much of the forestland had been depleted, used over the years as firewood, building material, grazing land for goats and sheep, and even train tracks in the Ottoman era.

"When people came to the land it looked like desert," said Yagil Osem, a forestry expert at Israel's Agriculture Ministry. "Part of the Zionist ethos was to rehabilitate the view."

After several failed attempts with other species, the Aleppo pine (also known as the Jerusalem pine) was chosen in the 1930s as the ideal tree for planting. Selected for its heartiness in arid soil and ability to grow quickly and soar high into the sky, the tree created the kind of forests with room for hiking and recreation that the Jews living in prestate Palestine knew of from Europe.

Today that first generation of pines is aging, demanding more water and more prone to problems like pests, disease and fire, according to Osem. Forests that are almost exclusively pine planted of the same age and variety are especially vulnerable, he said.

The planting paradigm began to shift by the 1980s with a growing awareness of the importance of forest diversification. Other native varieties began to be introduced, including carob, pistachio, oak and other varieties of pine. The common oak is seen throughout the country's forests.

Now the goal is to have as many "mixed" forests as possible with a focus on sustainable management, JNF officials say.

Among the non-native pine species introduced in recent years to Israel are the Brutia, a variety that grows in Turkey and Cyprus and is known for being more pest resistant, and the Stone pine (also known as the nut pine), which produces pine nuts. The Stone pine is thought originally to have been brought to the Holy Land by the Romans, who cooked with pine nuts.

In a land where even trees have become politicized as part of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the pine tree has become emblematic of a renewed Jewish presence here, while the olive tree has become a symbol of the Palestinians' ties to the land. Of course, in biblical times the Jews were also known for tending olive trees. The olive tree's deep historical roots date back some 10,000 years as this agricultural commodity took on important regional economic importance.

Other prominent trees in Israel include the carob, which grows throughout the country. Originally from Africa, it is a relatively late local species, and like other successful trees here it needs little water to thrive. A cousin to the carob is the almond tree, whose white blossoms are harbingers of Tu b'Shvat's arrival. It grows both at higher elevations and in the transition zone between the coastal Mediterranean plain and the desert. In its wild form its almonds are inedible, so it's the domesticated variety that provides the almonds commonly eaten on Tu b'Shvat. Fig trees also are native and grow naturally near Israel's rivers and streams.

Cypress trees, which can live for hundreds of years, also are part of the Israeli landscape, most commonly seen in the North. Experts think the species may be native but that it disappeared over the centuries by locals attracted to the wood produced by its attractive, straight shape. The cypresses of today were brought from other parts of the Mediterranean and planted here. They are used often in landscaping and, because of their candle-like appearance, are planted frequently in the country's cemeteries.

Date palms, located in the Arava Desert and the Jordan Valley, grow naturally along desert streams, but it's not clear whether such trees are native or the result of the casual tossing of their seeds by snacking Bedouin nomads.

Citrus trees, specifically the Jaffa orange, are cultivated in groves along the coastal plain, and in the 1950s and 1960s they represented something of an unofficial national symbol. But with the shrinking of Israel's agriculture industry, many of the groves have been replaced by homes and office buildings.

Israeli citrus—oranges, lemons, tangerines and pomellos—are still exported in relatively large quantities, especially to Europe but even as far afield as Japan. It is thought that the first orange varieties were brought to the region by Arab traders who brought them from China and India. The introduction of more commercially successful avocado, mango and banana plantations have edged out many of the remaining citrus groves in Israel.

Much of the tree-planting energy today in Israel goes to the northern Negev Desert, where trees are being planted not on the grand level of the forests in the North but in small orchards and green areas as sources of shade and recreation. Their growth is assisted with collected rainwater by planting the trees in small depressions where the water can pool.

Osem says these Israeli rainwater collection techniques are being copied by countries suffering from desertification in parts of Africa and Asia. It's one way the spirit of Tu b'Shvat is going global. ■

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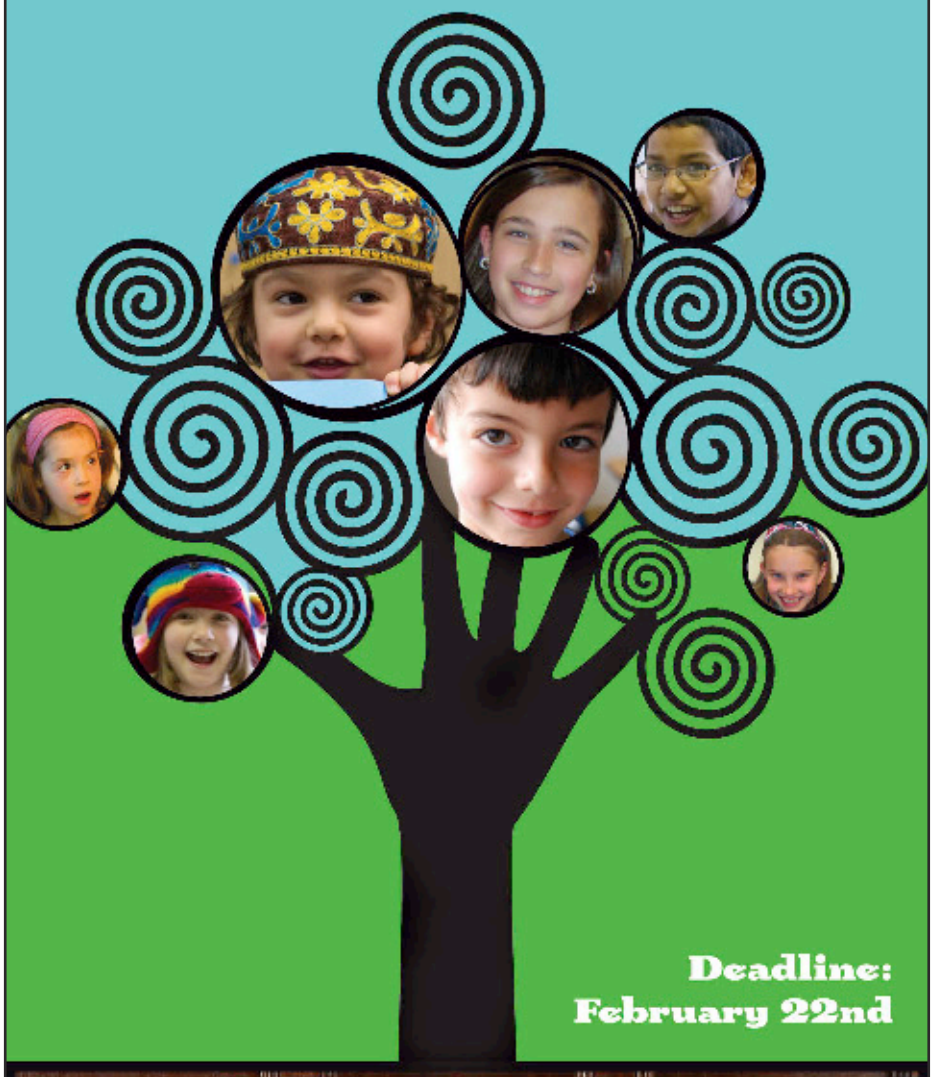

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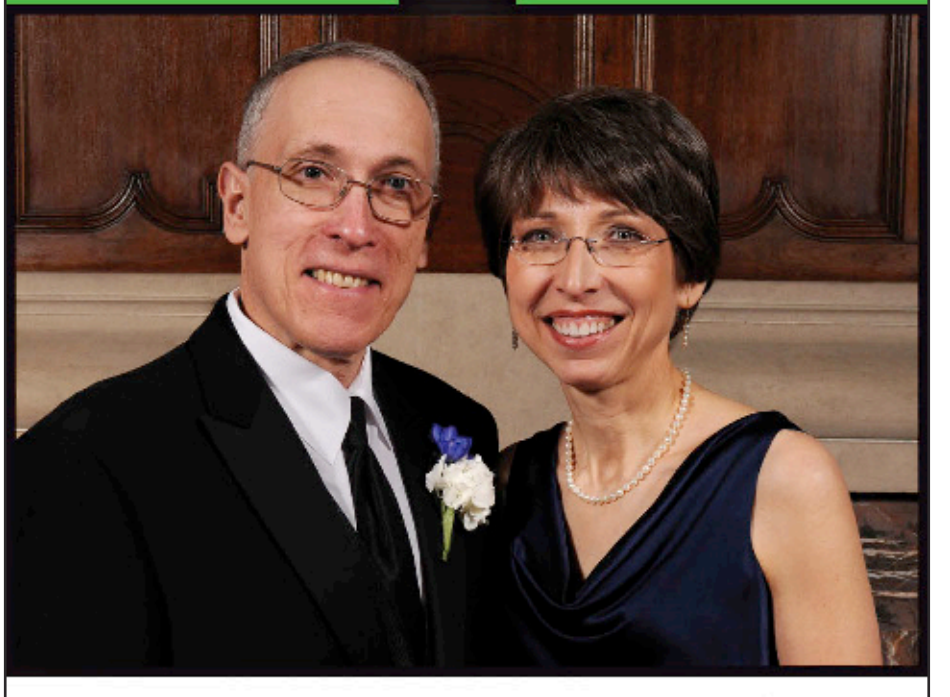

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Jewish groups adjusting agendas for new GOP-led Congress

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Faced with a new Congress intent on slashing the U.S. federal budget, Jewish groups are trimming their agendas to hew to its contours.

On issues from Israel aid to the environment to elderly care, Jewish organizations are planning to promote priorities that would find favorable reception in the new Republican-led U.S. House of Representatives. The groups are trying to build alliances based on shared interests and recasting pitches for existing programs as Republican-friendly.

"Some parts of our agenda won't have much traction in this new climate," acknowledged Josh Protas, the Washington director for the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. "We are looking for items that have bipartisan priorities."

To be sure, Democrats still control the White House and the Senate, and many conservative initiatives will die in the Senate or by the stroke of a presidential veto. But the House, with its considerable oversight powers and its ability to stymie legislation, remains extremely important.

Protas says the JCPA, an umbrella body for Jewish public policy groups, already has had meetings with staff members of the new House speaker, Rep. John Boehner (R-Ohio).

On domestic issues, many of the major Jewish organizations are devoted to policies that directly contradict Republican approaches. According to Protas, Boehner's staffers told JCPA representatives that the best strategy for working around that is to cherry-pick the smaller issues within the broader agendas that could appeal to Republicans.

"We definitely got the sense that smaller, more focused legislation is what we'll be seeing, so we're trying to look at more discrete cases," he said.

For example, on elderly care, a signature issue of the Jewish Federations of North America. The JFNA will seek to frame Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, or NORCs, one of the jewels of the federation system, as a cost savings, according to William Daroff, director of the Jewish Federations' Washington office.

NORCs have been pitched previously as appealing earmarks for lawmakers to insert into bills. But Republicans say they will eliminate earmarks, or discretionary spending by lawmakers; the Jewish Federations' emphasis on cost-effectiveness is an attempt to hit a popular Republican note.

"Programs like NORC," Daroff said, "shift governmental policy away from expensive institutionalized care to less expensive" programs.

Daroff invoked Republican talking points in explaining how the Jewish Federations would continue to seek funding for security for Jewish community institutions. Security funding, to the tune of tens of millions of dollars in recent years, has given local law enforcement the power to decide exactly how the money is spent, not federal officials. "It's not a nameless, faceless bureaucrat in downtown Washington making a decision but someone in a community allocating funds to what a community feels its needs are," he said.

Another strategy is to establish relationships with Republican Congress members based on mutual concerns, and then trying to make the lawmakers aware of what drives Jewish community concerns, said Mark Pelavin, the associate director of the Reform movement's Religious Action Center.

He cited international religious liberty issues, including the persecution of Christians around the world.

"You have to go member by member to find people's interests," he said.

Jewish organizations will continue to promote some issues even if the Republican-controlled Congress isn't interested in them. Protas and Pelavin cited cuts in funding for the supplemental nutrition assistance program, or food stamps, as an area where their groups would push back against GOP cuts. Daroff mentioned plans by some fiscal conservatives to disburse funding for Medicaid and poverty assistance in bloc grants to states, which would dilute spending on programs for the disabled.

Israel funding is likely to remain steady, Capitol Hill sources said, although there are concerns about how the funding will take place given the Republicans' interest in trimming foreign spending.

Some leading Republicans, including Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.), the new chairwoman of the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, say Congress could separate funding for Israel from overall foreign spending, allowing conservatives to maintain current levels for Israel while slashing foreign spending for countries they don't see as friendly or programs they oppose.

The pro-Israel community sees such a proposal as disastrous, in part because it will make Israel a "special case" after years of efforts to make backing Israel a natural extension of foreign policy. That could engender resentment of Israel.

Correspondingly, the pro-Israel lobby sees foreign aid as a means to bolster support for the U.S.-Israel alliance in the international community. Pro-Israel groups in Washington often have taken the lead in lobbying for Israel-friendly countries in the past.

One proposal has been to make Israel funding a part of defense spending. Insiders say they have been reassured that Rep. Kay Granger (R-Texas), the chairwoman of the foreign operations subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, has no intention of giving up funding for Israel and the power it yields her.

It also remains unclear what Republicans mean when they say they plan on keeping funding for Israel steady. Israel and the United States are in the middle of a 10-year agreement that incrementally increases assistance year by year between 2007 and 2017, so that it averages $3 billion a year.

Does "keeping funding steady" mean maintaining the 2010 level of $2.775 billion, or keeping to the agreement and upping the amount to $3 billion this year?

Officials say the best asset available to Jewish organizations dealing with domestic and foreign policy is the grass roots—not the lobbyists in Washington, but the activists across the country who make appointments to see their lawmakers on home visits.

The lesson of the Tea Party, the grass-roots movement that propelled Republicans to retake the House, should not be lost on Jewish groups, says Sammie Moshenberg, the Washington director for the National Council of Jewish Women, which will advocate this year for President Obama's judicial nominees, pay equity and immigration reform, among other issues.

"The inside-the-Beltway strategy is to find our friends where we can, on a bipartisan basis," she said. "But also to get the grass roots to speak out—that's key, that's what always turns the tide. If the Tea Party taught us nothing, it's that getting folks to speak out and be persistently involved makes a difference." ■

With eye on long term, Israel plans for 'leapfrog' growth to stem brain drain

By Dina Kraft

JERUSALEM (JTA)—It was at a conference 15 years ago in the raw months following Yitzhak Rabin's assassination that an unlikely Israeli trio—a young Navy officer, a leading businesswoman and a senior bureaucrat—hatched a plan for Israel's future.

It wasn't exactly a plan for the future, but a plan to plan for the country's future in an entirely new way: one focused on long-term strategic thinking to propel Israel into the world's top 15 socioeconomic powers.

Last week, the goal of becoming a nation with one of the highest GDPs per capita—the type of dramatic "leapfrog" growth that would see incomes and other quality-of-life metrics boosted across the socioeconomic divide—went from an idea to headline news when the goal was adopted as policy by the Israeli government.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, at a conference in Jerusalem called Israel 2021, announced to a hall packed with government officials, business leaders, students and social activists that "Good strategy with mediocre execution is better than mediocre strategy excellently performed. Our goal therefore is to present an excellent strategy for Israel.

"We cannot rest on our laurels," he said. "We are entering a more competitive era."

The plan is to turn Israel into a "leapfrogging" nation. That's defined as a case in which a nation triggers high and sustained growth for eight years while providing high quality of life—not just economically but also in terms of social services such as education, welfare and health. For Israel, leapfrogging is seen as imperative to keeping the country's best talent from migrating overseas.

Israel is suffering from acute "brain drain." The country exports more PhDs than any other—a quarter of Israeli academics work abroad—and tens of thousands of others live in an ever-swelling Israeli Diaspora where career opportunities and higher quality of life beckon.

Gidi Grinstein, president of the Reut Institute—the think tank that partnered with The Marker, the business section of Israel's daily *Haaretz,* to host the conference—is the once-young naval officer who has been championing Israeli leapfrog growth for a decade and a half.

The other two he originally designed the plan with are Raya Strauss, co-owner of Strauss Investment Ltd., and David Brodet, then the director general of the Finance Ministry.

At the conference Grinstein spoke of the dire existential consequences for Israel if an increasing amount of the country's talent leaves the country.

> ***The goal of becoming a nation with one of the highest GDPs per capita…went from an idea to headline news when the goal was adopted as policy by the Israeli government.***

The problem, he said, is that Israel has the highest gap in the world between local talent and local quality of life.

"Israelis are short-changed in quality of life, and if this gap grows beyond a certain level we could lost a critical amount of our talent," Grinstein said.

The conference convened some 3,000 Israeli decision makers to talk long-range strategy—not the strong suit of Israeli governments, which historically have prided themselves on improvisation in times of crisis rather than long-term strategic thinking, particularly outside the military arena.

Hailed as the "biggest brainstorming session in Israel's history" by its organizers, the conference featured hundreds of roundtable discussions by experts in civil society, economics and government. There were two days of intense discussion on a series of topics, including Israel's competitiveness internationally and the integration of Arab citizens and haredi Orthodox Israelis into the labor force.

Grinstein said the roundtables were part of a transformation in Israeli public discourse he believes is pivotal for leapfrogging to work.

"Countries don't leap because of a small group of people at the top who make decisions," Grinstein told JTA. "In Israel we need to mobilize what we call the serving elite: leadership in business, NGOs, academics, heads of labor unions and government. We know in countries that leapt there was an honest and credible discourse about priorities between business leaders, the nongovernment elite and the government. We need to educate and empower that group.

"Not all of them believed they are part of a large enough and powerful enough group to transform Israel, and we wanted to give them confidence that they are part of the group that could change Israel," he said.

The conference also brought together three leading international experts on long-term development for their guidance on how lessons from abroad might be applicable to Israel. They were Michael Spence, a 2001 Nobel Prize laureate in economics; Rory O'Donnell, head of the National Economic and Social Council of Ireland; and Ricardo Hausman, director of the center for International Development at Harvard University.

Economists at the conference argued that Israel cannot depend on its high-tech sector, which spurred most of the dramatic growth seen in the past two decades, in either the short or long term. That's because studies show that it's not growth in the elite sectors of the economy that boost high per capita GDP but higher salaries for workers across the socioeconomic spectrum.

Recent leapfrogging success stories include Germany, Ireland, China, Singapore and South Korea.

O'Donnell, the Irish economist who helped craft his country's economic ascent from one of the poorest countries in Europe to one of its wealthiest until the recent economic crisis, cited the parallels he saw in the Irish and Israeli experiences as small countries with large Diasporas, often fragile coalition governments and a history of national conflict.

While in the past two years Ireland has returned to economic dire straits, O'Donnell ascribed his country's dramatic rise until 2008 after decades of high employment to a "social partnership" between government, employers and unions. Among their successes was managing to get large numbers of long-term unemployed back into the labor market through activist public policy that promoted universal job training.

In an interview with JTA, O'Donnell suggested that it was a model that might be applicable to Israel as it struggles to increase the low workforce participation of the haredi and Arab sectors.

Yitzhak Herzog, speaking as Israel's welfare minister at the conference—he has since resigned—underscored the challenges ahead when he bemoaned what he described as a lack of public interest in forward-thinking strategy in Israeli.

"The demands are immediate and fast-paced," he said. "When you talk about the long term, there is rarely deep public debate."

Emerging from a roundtable meeting on Israeli competitiveness, Jerusalem artist Aramit Lotem said she hoped such discussions were indicative of a new national conversation.

"I think it addresses an important question that touches on Israel's very essence," she said, "because one of the things we have yet to succeed at as a country is moving from the project of establishing a state to being ready to really look towards the future and the long-term." . ■

Israeli population in U.S. surges, but exact figures hard to determine

By Sue Fishkoff

SAN FRANCISCO (JTA)—The number of Israelis living in the United States grew by about 30 percent over the past decade, according to newly released U.S. Census Bureau figures.

Some 140,323 people living in the United States today were born in Israel, up from 109,720 in 2000. Of the Israelis living here, 90,179 have U.S. citizenship and 50,144 do not.

But Israeli expatriates and Israeli government sources say the true figure is actually much higher. An Israeli Foreign Ministry study in 2003 reported that 500,000 Israelis were living in the United States, according to the Israeli daily *Yediot Achronot.*

"Estimates of Israeli emigrants in the U.S. are difficult to make and often subject to controversy," said Professor Steven Gold of Michigan State University, author of the 2002 book "*The Israeli Diaspora.*" The numbers suggest that migration to America from Israel exceeds American immigration to Israel, or aliyah. From 2000 through 2009, 23,640 U.S. citizens made aliyah, according to the Jewish Agency for Israel.

The U.S. data on the Israeli population comes from the 2009 American Community Survey, an annual report produced by the U.S. Census Bureau that was released earlier this year and updated in recent weeks. The decennial census stopped collecting detailed information such as country of origin after 2000; that information is now collected and included in the bureau's annual community surveys.

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The survey also reported that 27 percent of Israelis in the United States arrived since 2000. Three-quarters are between the ages of 25 and 65. Forty-five percent of the adults have at least an undergraduate degree, and more than 80 percent hold white-collar jobs. And just to dispel a popular stereotype, only 4.6 percent work in the "production, transportation and material moving occupations."

The Israeli Leadership Council in Los Angeles, an organization that promotes communal identity among local Israeli Jews, says that about 250,000 Israelis live in the greater L.A. region. The council's figures are based on information from the Israeli Consulate in Los Angeles, said a spokesperson for the group. The consulate would not confirm the figures to JTA.

A UJA-Federation of New York study published in February 2009 reported about 80,000 people living in households with at least one Israeli adult in New York City and three suburban counties. Dave Matkowsky, director of the resource center for Jewish diversity at the 92nd Street Y in Manhattan, says his department uses that figure "with caveats," suggesting that the real number may be higher.

Aside from New York and Los Angeles, the metropolitan areas of Boston, San Francisco and Miami also have significant Israeli populations. So which numbers are more accurate, the census figures or the Jewish estimates?

Leonard Saxe, director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University, notes that many Israelis in the United States are here temporarily and might not be counted as "residents." He also says that many people holding Israeli passports may not have been born in Israel but in the former Soviet Union or even the United States. They would not show up in the Census Bureau statistics but would be counted as Israeli citizens by most other estimates, including those of the Israeli government.

Another discrepancy could be in how Israelis are counted. Israel considers as Israelis children born to Israelis, even if they've never been to Israel, Gold noted. Those children would not show up as Israelis in the U.S. Census figures.

Then there are political sensitivities.

"Official estimates of Israelis abroad, especially those released by the Jewish Agency or Ministry of Absorption [versus the more conservative Central Bureau of Statistics] are regarded as often exaggerated and inconsistent with data collected via systematic methods, perhaps because of an effort to draw attention to the issue of Israeli emigration," Gold said.

Columbia University sociologist Yinon Cohen has come up with what Gold calls "the most careful estimates," drawing upon the U.S. Census, the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics and American Jewish population surveys.

Cohen estimates that between 150,000 and 175,000 Jewish Israeli expats were living in the United States as of 2000 .■

Amid crisis and violence, Tunisian Jews safe but guarded

By Larry Luxner

WASHINGTON (JTA)—The violence roiling Tunisia hasn't put the country's 1,500 or so Jews in serious jeopardy, but Jewish organizations are increasingly concerned about their fate as massive anti-government protests continue.

No Jews have been targeted by the protesters, according to Roger Bismuth, a Jewish businessman and member of Tunisia's Chamber of Deputies.

President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, who had ruled Tunisia with an iron fist for 23 years, fled to Saudi Arabia last month following violent protests by mostly unemployed young men venting their anger at Ben Ali and his wealthy cronies.

The North African country's interim prime minister and president, Mohamed Ghannouchi and Fouad Mebazaa, both resigned from what had been the country's ruling party.

"The community is fine," Bismuth told JTA by phone from Tunis. "Up until now we've had no problems. This is not really a matter of religion; it's a popular revolution. The Jewish community is very well taken care of."

Asked about Ben Ali, often described by the local Jewish community as a protector of Tunisia's Jews, Bismuth sounded a new tone.

"He was behaving like a crook," Bismuth said. "He and his family stole property from people and the state, and they destroyed everything they could put their hands on."

Natan Sharansky, the chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, described the Tunisian government of Ben Ali as a "corrupt and kleptocratic dictatorship."

About 1,000 Jews, the majority of Tunisia's Jewish community, live on the island of Djerba, where Jews have maintained a historical presence for more than 2,000 years. Another 400 Jews live in Tunis, the capital, with much smaller communities in Zarzis, Sfax and Sousse.

About 1,000 Jews, the majority of Tunisia's Jewish community, live on the island of Djerba, where Jews have maintained a historical presence for more than 2,000 years.

The country's population of 9.5 million is nearly all Muslims. Islam is the state religion of Tunisia, which sits on the Mediterranean coast between Algeria and Libya just south of Italy.

In 2002, a terrorist attack on the El-Ghriba synagogue in Djerba involving a truck bomb killed 21 tourists, mostly Germans. Al-Qaida took responsibility for the bombing.

Judy Amit, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee's regional director for Africa and Asia, said her organization has been in daily contact with Tunisian Jewish leaders throughout the crisis. "Ever since the rioting erupted there, we've been in close contact with members of the community," said Amit, speaking in an interview from Israel. "It's an economic protest with local grievances related to high unemployment and high food prices. There's been no violence against the Jewish community, and no Jews or Jewish institutions have been targeted."

Jason Isaacson, director of government and international affairs at the American Jewish Committee, noted that "Jews have been part of the fabric of Tunisian life for more than 2,000 years, since well before the Arab conquest."

Yet Isaacson, who visited Tunisia last month, warned that things could quickly change for the worse. "My concern is that if the situation is not stabilized, there could be further instability and create a breeding ground for extremism," he said. "That's not been a part of the equation, but it could happen if the enormous damage done first by Ben Ali and second by the riots is not compensated by a very serious international infusion of outside assistance."

As of the first week of January some 78 people have been killed, with economic losses estimated at $2.2 billion—equivalent to about 4 percent of Tunisia's GDP. Schools and universities have been shut down as a precaution against violence and vandalism by protesters, including the Chabad school in downtown Tunis.

Yechiel Bar-Chaim, JDC's country director for Tunisia, said his main concern is for the 100 Jews of Zarzis, who live in a two-square-block area just off the town center. Four non-Jewish civilians were killed during protests there, and a Jewish shop was among the many looted.

Bar-Chaim said that until a few days ago, this self-imposed "ghetto without walls" was carefully guarded by police. But the police have "simply disappeared from the streets of Zarzis and the army presence there is basically a passive one," he reported.

"The police have reportedly disappeared in many places throughout Tunisia," though a heavy police presence continues to guard the Grand Synagogue of Tunis and the central building of the Jewish community, he said.

Isaacson, who has been speaking by phone daily to Bismuth and other Tunisian Jewish leaders since the crisis began, said that "It's generally a secular uprising directed at the regime's corruption and economic stagnation and a general desire for freedom, especially in the last few days as unrest has continued."

Sharansky warned of an "ever-present possibility of anti-Jewish sentiment leading to violence" in the cities where Jews live and work.

"Before the revolt, Ben Ali had a tolerant attitude towards the Jewish community," he wrote. "Until the revolt there was no blatant anti-Semitism. However, an uncomfortable relationship between the Jewish community and the Arab population exists." ■

The new German anti-Semitism

By Donald Snyder

BERLIN (Forward)—Muslim teenagers in Hanover attack an Israeli dance troupe, reportedly yelling "*Juden raus*" as they hurl stones.

German leftists march in Berlin with Muslims to protest the 2008–2009 Gaza military conflict. "Death to the Jews!" the marchers chant.

At a soccer game between teams from the St. Pauli section of Hamburg and the city of Chemnitz in eastern Germany, the Chemnitz fans shout "*Sieg heil*" and wave imitation Nazi flags.

This is happening in a country where Holocaust education has long been mandatory and where expressions of anti-Semitism and the dissemination of hatred are illegal. Holocaust denial is a crime in Germany.

But generational and demographic changes are converging in Germany today, and a shift is afoot in the zeitgeist. While Germany continues to contend with vestiges of traditional anti-Semitism, a new and more deeply embedded strain has emerged related to Israel. Polls show that this strain is distinguishable from mere opposition to Israeli policies, or even from anti-Zionism. In a 2010 report by the University of Beilefeld's Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, institute researchers, who conduct an annual poll on anti-Semitism, found an increase linked specifically to Israel. Among their findings:

More than 57 percent of those polled agreed that Israel is waging "a war of annihilation" against the Palestinians (up from 51 percent in 2009).

In 2008 — the most recent year the question was asked — more than 40 percent agreed that "what Israel is doing to the Palestinians is basically no different from what the Nazis did with the Jews during the Third Reich."

More than 38 percent of Germans polled agreed that "considering the politics of Israel, it is easy to see why one would have something against Jews" (up from 34 percent in 2009).

Yet, at the same time, 67.5 percent in the 2010 poll agreed with the statement, "I like it that increasingly more Jews live in Germany."

"As a psychologist, I think that this reflects ambivalent attitudes," Beate Küpper, one of the researchers who produced the report, wrote in an e-mail to the Forward. "Germans are happy if there are some Jews in their country, as this gives us release. It shows off that we are tolerant…. However, the strong blaming of Israel common in Germany (because we like peace and go for the weaker…) is full of anti-Semitic stereotypes [and] associations."

"It's not so legitimate to attack Jews in Germany, so you attack Israel as a state — the collective Jew that represents the memory of the Holocaust."

Mirko Niehoff, a 31-year-old social worker who works with Muslim youth, said he sees aspects of these trends in his daily work. "We realized we were dealing with a new anti-Semitism with roots in the Middle East conflict," he said.

Observers say that Muslim and classic right-wing anti-Semitism are combining with a left-wing demonization of Israel to produce a toxic mix, despite Germany's postwar efforts to ensure that future generations continue to learn the lessons of the Holocaust. This new strain renders old ways of combating anti-Semitism less effective. According to some observers, in Germany the Holocaust narrative is no longer the powerful antidote it once was.

When former public school teacher Sebastian Voigt, now a doctoral candidate at the University of Leipzig, told his teenage students they would study the Nazi period, many complained that they had already studied the Holocaust..

This alienation from German history is compounded by the fact that many Muslim youths don't feel accepted as Germans themselves. They show little interest in this dark chapter of German history.

Meanwhile, many of Germany's 4 million Muslims stay connected with events in the Middle East via cable television networks, such as Hezbollah's Al-Manar and Hamas's Al-Aqsa. These anti-Semitic networks promote Holocaust denial.

"You cannot undo with education what these satellite broadcasts are doing," said Matthias Kuntzel, an author and political scientist, in a phone interview from Hamburg.

The programs are fed to Germany via Egyptian and Saudi Arabian satellites. Both countries have refused repeated German requests to stop transmitting Al-Manar. Although Al-Manar was banned in 2008, private homes with satellite dishes continue to receive its programs, making the ban ineffective.

To be sure, both Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and its invasion and blockade of Gaza are substantive issues criticized by the majority of Germans. Taken at face value, opposition to Israel need not be assumed to be anti-Semitic. But the majority who tell pollsters they view Israel's actions toward the Palestinians as a "war of annihilation" and "principally not different than what the Nazis did with the Jews during the Third Reich" reflect a country in which the lines are blurred between opposition to Israeli actions and policies and anti-Semitism.

According to Lars Rensmann, an expert on anti-Semitism from Germany who teaches political science at the University of Michigan, for reasons peculiar to his native country, hatred of Jews may lurk below the surface even at protests that stop short of overt anti-Semitism.

"It's not so legitimate to attack Jews in Germany, so you attack Israel as a state — the collective Jew that represents the memory of the Holocaust," Rensmann said.

Despite widespread criticism of Israel within Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel's government continues to strongly support the Jewish state. Yoram Ben-Zeev, Israeli ambassador to Germany, spoke enthusiastically about his relationship with the chancellor during an interview at his embassy.

Still, Ben-Zeev conceded, the German public has a negative view of Israel, as does most of Europe. Germany's support for Israel, normally unwavering, is no longer automatic. Last July, the Bundestag unanimously condemned Israel for its attack on the Mavi Marmara, the Turkish ship bound for Gaza with humanitarian aid.

"The resolution condemning Israel was scary," said Lala Susskind, president of the Jewish Community in Berlin. "It was the first

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Iran's bomb delayed, is the urgency gone?

By Ron Kampeas

WASHINGTON (JTA)—In the wake of revelations that a computer virus may have set back Iran's nuclear weapons program, the Western groups and analysts that track the Islamic Republic are saying "More of the same, please."

The benefits of a nonviolent program that inhibits Iranian hegemony by keeping the country's nuclear weapons program at bay are obvious: Better to stop Iran with cyber warfare—in this case, the Stuxnet computer virus, which reportedly caused Iran's nuclear centrifuges to spin out of control—than actual warfare.

For those who favor engagement, the cyber attack buys more time to coax the regime in Tehran into compliance. For those who favor the stick, it allows more time to exert pressure on Iran through sanctions and diplomatic isolation.

Almost coincident with last month's revelations—published in the *New York Times* on January 15, 2010, in a piece that detailed the extent of the damage caused by the virus—Meir Dagan, the outgoing head of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, said that Iran likely would not have a bomb before 2015. Prior to that, Israeli assessments had predicted a weapon as early as this year.

The Stuxnet revelations, if anything, reinforce the need for a tough stance, said Rep. Howard Berman (D-Calif.), the ranking member of the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee. They underscore how committed Iran is to producing a bomb, he told JTA.

"It's a reason to push down on the pedal," said Berman, who crafted the most recent Iran sanctions law in the Congress. "Iran is still enriching uranium. It is absolutely critical we bear down with a comprehensive strategy of which sanctions is a critical part."

Mark Dubowitz, the executive director of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, said the delay was welcome but that the prospect of new complacency in the wake of its announcement makes it more urgent than ever to maintain a posture that includes the threat of a military strike on Iran.

"No individual measure is a silver bullet," he said. Stuxnet "set back the program but hasn't stopped it. If you're going to target a hard-line regime, you've got to have a military option on the table."

Such a concern was behind Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's furious backpedaling in the wake of Dagan's pronouncement about 2015. The Israeli leader dismissed the prediction as one of several "intelligence estimates." Dagan, reportedly under pressure from the Prime Minister's Office, recast the deadline this week as 2014 and noted carefully that Iran is capable of surprises.

Champions of engagement also welcomed the revelations of the damage Stuxnet apparently caused to Iran's nuclear program, seeing it as an opportunity.

"The cyber worm may have set back Iran's nuclear program, but it is unlikely to alter its nuclear ambitions," said Ori Nir, the spokesman for Americans for Peace Now. "In order to introduce real change, the U.S. and its international allies must change the manner in which they deal with Iran and start to comprehensively engage with Tehran."

Hadar Susskind, the vice president for policy at J Street, the liberal pro-Israel lobby that advocates for U.S. pressure on Israel in talks with the Palestinians, said the news of the virus demonstrated that there are creative ways of working around military brinksmanship when it comes to Iran.

"Any nonviolent method is good," Susskind said. "It shows we can create more time using a range of tools."

No nation or entity has acknowledged being behind the virus, which seemed to be designed to assume control of the nervous system at Iran's nuclear facilities and to spin the centrifuges out of control, damaging about a fifth of them. The *Times*, citing anonymous sources, suggested that it was a U.S.-led venture with Israel's cooperation. Germany and Britain also may have been involved, though perhaps unwittingly.

Mark Fitzpatrick, the director of the nonproliferation and disarmament program at the London-based International Institute of International Studies, said it was critical not to regard the virus as a "deus ex machina" that would allow the world to shunt aside considerations of Iran's ambitions.

"Any solution to the Iranian crisis will require the use of a range of tools, including tougher sanctions, tighter export controls, a containment and deterrence posture, and a readiness to talk," he said. "Stuxnet obviously provides some breathing space by extending the timeline for Iran to get a bomb. It would be nice if it also gave Iranians a sense of futility that their enrichment efforts are not going to give them a bomb anytime soon."

That's not likely to happen, according to Geneive Abdo, the director of the Washington-based National Security Network's Inside Iran project. Iran's leadership is susceptible to popular Iranian support for its nuclear program.

Because of public opinion, she said, "They're very careful that they're not compromising on this issue."

If anything, Abdo said, the revelations will prod the regime to become more recalcitrant when it comes to major compromises, like shutting down enrichment entirely. Iran has tended to harden its line when it is weak.

Instead, she said, Western powers might press for compromise on smaller issues like a broader regime of U.N. inspections. Western powers were scheduled to meet in Istanbul with Iran to discuss its nuclear program.

"The West should use this breathing space to try and convince Iran to agree to more verification," Abdo said. Citing her sources inside Iran, she said "The Iranians are more fearful that more damage is on the way, so that's an incentive to compromise to some degree."

Indeed, Iran last month invited representatives of major powers to tour its enrichment plant in Natanz to see that Iran is limiting itself to civilian-level nuclear power. The major powers—including the United States, Russia, the European Union and China—declined, saying that the only inspections they would sanction would be by qualified inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog.

Dagan's prediction and the Stuxnet leaks may have been timed precisely to pressure

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A personal note of mourning for a cherished teacher

Aura Ahuvia, special to the WJN

I wanted to share a personal word about the passing of Debbie Friedman. Debbie died on Sunday, January 9, while I was away at an annual rabbinic study retreat. There were many of us at that gathering who knew Debbie personally, and who mourned for her and cried for her loss together. We felt surprisingly bereft, given that Debbie was our teacher and not an immediate family member. Why did she have such influence on us?

For me, Debbie Friedman's music spoke directly to my heart from the first time I heard it, as a teenager. She created songs that were easy to sing, easy to learn, and harmony-rich. They spoke to me on a deep level, beyond the reach of thought.

Debbie Friedman.

I had the thrill of meeting Debbie in person for the first time ten years ago, when I attended a workshop called *Hava Nashira*, for Jewish song-leaders and service-leaders from around the country. The director of the Reform camp where it took place, Jerry Kaye, was one of the many people who offered a *hesped*, or eulogy, for Debbie during her two-hour long funeral, which was streamed live to over 8,000 viewers world-wide. I remember how tongue-twisted I got, trying to tell her how much her music meant to me. But she cut me off, as if the compliment embarrassed her. As the years passed, and I got to learn more from her in person, I came to observe how she strove to empower and encourage everyone around her. Once, at *Hava Nashira*, I led a song for a small group of people during an afternoon workshop. It was a magical moment. When I was done, I turned to Debbie for a critique, and she was beaming. "See what just happened?" she asked. "You did that. You created that." Her encouragement was deeply affecting.

The most recent time I saw her was at a smaller version of *Hava Nashira* this past October. I recall sitting around in a circle with Debbie plus about 15 other students one afternoon. We each shared our stories of who we were, and how we had evolved as service or song-leaders. When my turn came, I got to share my epiphany, from my first *Hava Nashira* 10 years ago, of coming "home," in the sense of self-discovery. It was my first realization that I was a "music person," because I was surrounded by people like me, who sang, could spontaneously harmonize, who played music, etc. I also recounted the story of how I grew from there to entering rabbinic school several years later. When I finished my story, Debbie pushed back on her chair and caught my eye. "I want to talk to you later. I have something to say to you." Okay, I thought. But after our group session, a mob of people surrounded her. I thought to myself, "I'll just catch her later." But later never came.

I never got the chance to find out what she wanted to say to me, and this I regret dearly. Her illness and death were so sudden, so shocking, and as I said to a friend of mine, felt so unscheduled. I felt raw, and turned in my grieving to the many friends from *Hava Nashira* who were both at the conference I was attending, or who were home. We talked by phone, or sometimes just sat there in silence, and we cried.

A remarkable thing occurred at the conference I was attending when Debbie died. The conference included a ceremony, Sunday afternoon, ordaining seven new rabbis. There is an official ritual piece called "the Lineage," which is recited as part of this ceremony. In it, the lineage of Jewish teachers is recalled, starting with Moshe rabbeinu (Moses our teacher), and continuing through all of the generations to the present day. ALEPH: The Alliance for Jewish Renewal also recites the female lineage, starting with Miriam *ha-n'viyah* (Miriam the prophet) and continuing through all the generations of female teachers. Our Rosh Yeshiva, or head of our rabbinic program, Rabbi Daniel Siegel, paused just before reciting the female lineage, and spoke eloquently of Debbie as a "fellow traveler." He then officially included her officially in ALEPH's female lineage, conferring on her the status of Teacher of the People Israel along with all other great and notable teachers in that long and honored lineage. It felt so right, and I was deeply gratified that he did this. I am so grateful, and feel so blessed, to have had the privilege of knowing and learning from Debbie Friedman, Dina Leah bat Friedl v'Gavriel. May her memory be for a blessing, and may her music continue to touch us, inspire us, and heal us. ■

Aura Ahuvia is a rabbinic student with ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal, and also the rabbinic student intern with the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah.

Editor's note: Some of the songs familiar to us that Debbie wrote include the healing prayer, *Mi Sheberach*, the melody that is commonly sung for Havdallah, and the song *Lech l'cha*. She also wrote the *Aleph-Bet* song, popular in religious schools.

A note Friedman posted on her website captures the spirit in Friedman that so many found inspiring.

"Sometimes life takes its turns into the unknown and presents us with challenges we would have preferred not to encounter. Suddenly we are confronted with our pain," Friedman wrote. "Our pain need not bury us, instead it may elevate us to the point of healing—if we choose to allow it.

"Remember, out of what emerges from life's painful challenges will come our healing. And ultimately, our greatest healing will come when we use our suffering to heal another's pain—'to release another from their confinement.'"

Three Michigan klezmer bands offer exciting variety

Sandor Slomovitz, staff writer

This month I'd like to introduce three recent recordings by Michigan bands. All three are strongly influenced by klezmer music and, like klezmorim have for countless years, all three are stretching the boundaries of that genre, while creating music that falls clearly within its borders.

I'll start with the band closest to home: the Ann Arbor based Ethnic Connection.

THE ETHNIC CONNECTION
AN ECLECTIC COLLECTION
Balkan, Israeli, Yiddish, Klezmer, Waltzes, Polkas, Swing, Old Pop Songs, Hillbilly, Boogie Woogie, Barbershop, and Ethnic connections!
GUT MORGN
HEARTLAND KLEZMORIM

The Ethnic Connection quartet has its origins in an earlier band, the NAMA Orchestra, that leader, David Owens formed in 1970 in Los Angeles. NAMA played a wide variety of music from all over the world, and when Owens moved to Ann Arbor, he found kindred musical spirits in three local musicians and with them he's continued playing a similarly eclectic repertoire. Since the early 1990s Owens, along with Carol Palms, (who sings and plays bass, cello, violin, and is also a member of the string band, the Raisin Pickers) Nan Nelson (who sings and plays the mandolin, guitar, bass, dumbek, and tambura) and Ralph Katz (who sings and plays clarinet, and who's appeared with numerous local bands and orchestras including in many Gilbert & Sullivan productions) has continued to perform, and now finally record, this highly diverse mix of music.

The subtitle of The Ethnic Connection's self-titled CD is "An Eclectic Collection," and that's truth in advertising. The CD includes songs in Yiddish, Hebrew, English, Serbian, and Bulgarian, and dance tunes from each of those regions, plus also from Romania, Greece, Czechoslovakia, and France, and features a waltz medley and a polka medley from cultures too numerous to count. The collection's unifying theme seems to be the curiosity, respect and affection the members of the band feel for all of this music. You won't find many recordings that include *Rosie the Riveter*, *The Beer Barrel Polka*, an a cappella barbershop version of *Till We meet Again* and also, *Belz*, *Dem milner's trern*, *Heymisher sher* and *Tarras sirba* (made well-known by famed klezmer clarinetist, Dave Tarras).

There is excellent playing and inventive arrangements throughout. Who else would take *Friend for Life*, the Bryan Bowers/Bill Danoff song, and change it to 7/8 time—and make it sound just right? The CD also includes liner notes that are far more scholarly, comprehensive, and knowledgeable than most.

Next we head west, and meet the Heartland Klezmorim. This quintet hails from East Lansing and plays traditional klezmer music from Eastern Europe. They are fronted by the husband and wife team of David Klein and Susanne Garber. Klein is an instructor of the trumpet and cornet at the Michigan State University Community Music School, while Garber is an instructor of violin and viola at the Michigan State University Community Music and is CMS' Area Chair of Suzuki and Strings. Drew Howard, on banjo and dobro; Chris Hamilton on bass and guitar; and Ben Godoshian on percussion, round out the group.

Heartland Klezmorim's first CD, *Gut Morgn*, is a compilation of one hundred percent kosher klezmer instrumental tunes, mostly traditional, relatively familiar tunes. Their arrangements also rely, for the most part, on a traditional klezmer sound. The playing is impeccable. As you might expect from a married couple—both of whom are highly trained musicians—the unison melody lines between Klein's trumpet or cornet, and Garber's violin mesh very precisely, and create a unique, very pleasing blend. When they solo, their sound is gorgeous, soulful and, depending on the tune, energetic and lively. Heartland Klezmorim's rhythm section lays down crisp and tight grooves for the dance tunes, and supplies just right atmospheric backing on the slow, arrhythmic doinas.

Where HK pushes the klezmer envelope is with the rest of their instrumentation. Banjo has been considered a klezmer instrument in the modern klezmer revival since the late 1970s (mostly due to Henry Sapoznik's not inconsiderable influence, though as he learned, American klezmer bands were already incorporating it into their sound by the 1920s) but it's still not that commonly heard in klezmer music—the dobro even less so. But both these instruments sound completely at home on several tunes on *Gut Morgn*, including on one of the two legendary clarinetist Naftule Brandtwein's melodies. Oh, and I can't forget to say a word about their CD cover art—beautiful. All in all, Gut Morgn serves up a delicious musical blend of energizing, wakeup java, and soothing, calming, comfort food.

Heading west again, we come to Kalamazoo and meet The Red Sea Pedestrians—their name alone a not-so-mysterious clue to their origins. But where the Heartland Klezmorim are solidly in the old world klezmer tradition, and The Ethnic Connection spring from the all-over-the-world tradition, REP belie the title of their most recent CD, *Adrift*, to confidently sail into new world, new century waters, with just hints of klezmer winds to power them forward. Their bio claims that they are "a one-of-a-kind, full-blown, instrument-swapping fusion between tradition and the here-and-now. We're talkin' high-energy world-beat grooves, hypnotic laments from the earth, songs of celebration and wonder: a warped and beautiful blend of Klezmer, Greek, Gypsy, Celtic, Jazz and American Roots, all filtered through the band's original vision." And for once, the promo hype is completely true. From the first track, eerie harmonies, unconventional instrumentation and galloping rhythms immediately lets us know that, "Dorothy, we're not in Kansas any more."

Between them, the sextet, comprised of Ira Cohen, Rachel Flanigan, Jay Gavan, Ian Gorman, Michael Shimmin, and Cori Somers (who recently replaced Megan MacLeod, who sang and played violin on *Adrift*) play dozens of instruments, the assortment ranging from the commonplace—clarinet, mandolin, violin, guitar, bass, and drums—to the less familiar and even exotic—concertina, pump organ, glockenspiel, and percussion instruments such as the riqq. This huge variety allows them to create a rich, varied, unique, and multi-layered sound few bands can claim. They each are also gifted songwriters—their lyrics clever, comic, and filled with contemporary allusions. (I've not heard any other song that includes references to waterboarding interrogation techniques.) Their instrumentals are appealing, with sinuous, scalar melodies perfectly suited for their lead instruments to pick and slide around on, while their arrangements highlight tight harmonies and counter lines. Percussionist Shimmin deserves special mention for his noteworthy grooves, always tasteful, metronomically steady, yet never lockstep rigid. Oh, and a few final words about their CD cover art. Rachel Flanigan's clarinet playing and singing is at least equaled by her artistic and designing skills.

The Red Sea Pedestrians stroll and sprint through a refreshing mixture for klezmer fans and all music lovers alike. ■

Shabbat in Liverpool: New CD adapts Beatles' tunes for services

By Michael Feldstein

STAMFORD, Conn. (JTA)—When is it kosher to listen to the Beatles on the Sabbath?

When your chazan adapts the Kabbalat Shabbat Friday night service to the melodies of John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

Lenny Solomon, the founder of the song-parody group Shlock Rock, employed "nusach Liverpool" for a service in late December at the Young Israel of Hollywood, an Orthodox synagogue in South Florida.

"I've never had more pride in anything else that I have ever performed," said Solomon, who has been in the Jewish music business for 25 years. "I had created something new that could be sung in the shul. This is something that I had never done, and I was beaming by the time the services ended."

The service was the culmination of a years-long project for Solomon that has included the release of a CD with 21 Beatles' songs set to various parts of Shabbat services and liturgy.

On the CD, "Shalom Aleichem" is sung to the tune of "With a Little Help from My Friends"; the "V'Shamru" portion of kiddush is set to "The Long and Winding Road"; "Ein Keloheinu" sounds like "Let it Be"; and the Havdalah service is set to "Imagine."

The story of the CD began in 2004 when a friend and neighbor asked Solomon, who lives in Israel, for the 40th birthday gift of a CD of the songs of Kabbalat Shabbat set to Beatles music. Solomon was skeptical but the neighbor, Allen Krasna, sent him an Excel spreadsheet with the Beatles' songs in one column and the prayers and songs of the Shabbat service on the left.

Solomon went to work.

Working on and off, he needed nine months to take the 35 tunes and incorporate the melodies to the words of the Shabbat prayers.

Solomon recorded the CD, *A Shabbat in Liverpool,* in 2005, but it took another five years to obtain the proper licensing to release the project. The collection finally was released publicly last November as a 21-song CD, which is available for sale at Amazon and other retailers. (Samples of the collection are available at shlockrock.com.) Solomon was in the United States promoting the CD.

December 24, 2010 marked the first time that Solomon actually used the songs in a real service. The reaction at the Young Israel of Hollywood seemed to be mostly positive.

"I enjoyed it and sang along with Lenny," said congregant Avi Frier. "I think it will take awhile, though, for something like this to really catch on and became mainstream, like the Carlebach minyanim."

It was hardly the first time Jewish services have been set to secular music. Some of the most popular Shabbat tunes originally were secular songs, such as "Erev Shel Shoshanim" ("Evening of Lilies"), a Hebrew love song written in 1957 by Yaffa Yarkoni.

"Every song that comes into this world has a holy spark," Solomon said. "It is the obligation of the Jewish musician to take the best melodies of the secular world and bring them from the side of darkness to the side of light. This will cause the Jewish people to get closer to God and hasten the redemption."

Krasna, whose request spawned the creation of the CD, agrees.

"I'm in favor of anything that is done in the service that elevates one's spirituality," said Krasna, a lifelong Beatles fan. "Certainly, Conservative and Reform synagogues may embrace this kind of thing more easily, since they always look for ideas to make their services more relevant to the times. But I believe there is a place for these tunes even at Orthodox synagogues."

Solomon sees the Beatles service as a work in progress.

"My first effort at leading the service was not perfect," he said. "I do hope I'll have the opportunity to do this again, so that other congregants can learn the service and appreciate the rich Shabbat liturgy in a brand-new way.

"I'm also convinced that there are many people who ordinarily do not attend a synagogue but who can be introduced to the holy words of our Shabbat prayers through this music." ■

Calendar

February 2011

Tuesday 1

"Toward a Meaningful Life: A Soul-Searching Journey for Every Jew:" Jewish Learning Institute. The objective of this course is to teach new life skills based on traditional Torah thought and to empower individuals of all backgrounds to transform the way they view daily life. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC. *Every Tuesday.*

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting for the patients of Mott Hospital, art projects and card games. 1 p.m. Wii sports including bowling, tennis, golf and baseball. No experience necessary. 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including U-M and non-U-M participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Spirituality Book Club: TBE. With Cantor Annie Rose. This month's selection is *The Empty Chair: Finding Joy and Hope- Timeless Wisdom from a Hasidic Master,* by Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, and *I Asked for Wonder: A Spiritual Anthology* by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Samuel Dresner. 7:30–9 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 2

Music Appreciation Class: JCC and WCC Community Education. "French Music of the Romantic Era," with Nate Adam. Free to all Washtenaw County residents 65 and over. Register at 971-0990 or at the first class. 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch. Snacks and beverages will be provided. Noon.

Board Meeting: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

The Jewish Life Cycle: BIC. An Introduction, led by Rabbi Blumenthal. 7:45 p.m.

Thursday 3

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, Noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Spirituality Book Club: TBE. With Cantor Annie Rose. This month's selection is *The Empty Chair: Finding Joy and Hope- Timeless Wisdom from a Hasidic Master,* by Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, and *I Asked for Wonder: A Spiritual Anthology* by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Samuel Dresner. Noon–1:30 p.m.

Birthdays and Presentation: JCC-Seniors. Celebration for all with February birthdays. Family and friends invited for lunch and birthday cake at 12:30 p.m. Following celebration, wear your aloha shirt and join a virtual trip to Hawaii at 1 p.m.

"Which 'Jews' Were Still Jewish in Interwar Germany?" U-M Frankel Institute. University of Chicago Scholar Leora Auslander will discuss the questions raised by countless others related to "What Makes a Jew Jewish?" 1014 Tisch Hall at 435 South State Street. 4 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 4

Rosh Chodesh Adar: Women of the Wall. Lisa Bernstein, in solidarity with the organization Women of the Wall (womenofthewall.org.il), is organizer of this community, egalitarian service. RSVP to lisapbernstein@comcast.net. 9:30 a.m. at the JCC.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 5:30 p.m. Tot and Sukkat Shalom dinner at 6:30 p.m. Sukkat Shalom and Shira at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows.

Family Service: TBE. With Second Grade students. 7:30 p.m.

Interfaith Perspective Series: BIC. "The Mu-Jew Alternative Spring Break." Kabbalat Shabbat Service at 7:30 p.m. Oneg and Presentation at 8:15 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar*

Saturday 5

Shabbat Service: TBE. 10 a.m. in the chapel.

Rosh Chodesh Adar: BIC Women's League. 4 p.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Renaissance Bridge Group: TBE. 7 p.m.

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 6

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Word Wide Wrap: BIC. "Wrap" and Annual "Polar Bear Tefillin" Photo. 9:30 a.m.

Photographic Exhibit: Holocaust Memorial Center Gallery. "A Day in the Warsaw Ghetto: A Birthday Trip in Hell," is comprised of 85 photographs taken illegally by Wehrmacht Sergeant Heinz while wandering inside the Warsaw Ghetto on his birthday in November 1941. Co-sponsored by The Workman's Circle/Arbeter Ring. 28123 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills. For information and Center hours, call 248-553-2400. *Through March 12.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

6th Grade Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family Series: BIC. 10:45 a.m.

Super Bowl Party: BIC Men's Club. 6 p.m.

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday*.

Monday 7

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Tot Story Hour: TBE. TBE Librarian Wendy Holden will share a story with tots in the Temple Library. 10 a.m.

Torah Trop: TBE. Ongoing weekly group with Cantor Annie Rose. Noon.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. Study of *Tetzaveh* and *Va'yakhel.* Led by Cantor Annie Rose. 7–8:30 p.m.

Tuesday 8

"Toward a Meaningful Life: A Soul-Searching Journey for Every Jew:" Jewish Learning Institute. The objective of this course is to teach new life skills based on traditional Torah thought and to empower individuals of all backgrounds to transform the way they view daily life. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC. *Every Tuesday.*

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting for the patients of Mott Hospital, art projects and card games. 1 p.m. Wii sports including bowling, tennis, golf and baseball. No experience necessary. 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Mourning and Mitzvah: TBE. Cantor Rose leads a class on dealing with issues of mourning and grief. 2:30 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 9

Music Appreciation Class: JCC and WCC Community Education. "French Music of the Romantic Era," with Nate Adam. Free to all Washtenaw County residents 65 and over. Register at 971-0990 or at the first class. 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch. Snacks and beverages will be provided. Noon.

"Manasseh Sawed Isaiah With a Saw of Wood: An Ancient Legend in Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Persian Sources:" U-M Frankel Institute. Richard Kalmin of the Jewish Theological Seminary will discuss his examination of ancient and medieval accounts of the martyrdom of the biblical prophet Isaiah. Room 2022 at 202 South Thayer Street. 4 p.m.

Film Showing: EMU Hillel. Screening of *Encounter Point*, followed by discussion. Co-sponsored by Catholics on Campus and EMU Diversity and Community Involvement. Student Center Ballroom. 7–9 p.m.

The Jewish Life Cycle: BIC. An Introduction with Rabbi Blumenthal. 7:45 p.m.

Thursday 10

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, Noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Presentation: JCC Seniors. A nurse from Care Response will monitor blood pressures at 12:30 p.m., followed at 1 p.m. by a presentation on Irving Berlin's *God Bless America,* by Martin Schlichtman, professor of English Language and Literature and recently appointed Director of Jewish Studies at Eastern Michigan University.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 11

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 5:30 p.m. Tot and Sukkat Shalom dinner at 6:30 p.m. Sukkat Shalom and Shira at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Middle School Service: TBE. Led by middle-schoolers in the chapel. 7:30 p.m

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 12

Shabbat Limmud: BIC. With Rabbi Dobrusin. 9 a.m.

Blood Drive: TBE Brotherhood and American Red Cross. Sign up on TBE website to donate. 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Morning Service: TBE. In the chapel. 10 a.m.

Dinner and Whirly Ball: TBE TNT. The Twenties and Thirties (TNT) group will meet for dinner at 6:30 p.m. at El Camino Real, 625 Hilton Avenue near Briarwood Circle. Followed by an evening of Whirly Ball. Individuals pay for dinner, plus $12 for Whirly Ball. RSVP to bwillner@templebethemeth.org. 6:30–9 p.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Winter Melave Malka Series: Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan. Talk by Ilana Blumberg: "Remembering Joseph's Bones: Midrashim of Leaving Egypt." Vegetarian soup, muffins and cider will be served. 8 p.m. in the Hillel Lounge.

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 13

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Beth Israel Café: BIC Women's League. 9:30 a.m.

Red Cross Blood Drive: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Calendar

Meeting: BIC Men's Club. 9:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Reunion: JCC Early Childhood Center. A chance to revisit friends and teachers, for anyone who has attended the JCC's Early Childhood Center in the last ten years. A brownie sundae bar will be provided. $5 before February 8 and $8 after that date. 1–3 p.m.

All Ensemble Concert: TBE. One-hour concert featuring all TBE musical group. 4–5 p.m.

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learn the deeper meanings of the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 14

Torah Trop: TBE. Ongoing weekly group with Cantor Annie Rose. Noon.

Talmud Study: BIC. With Rabbi Dobrusin. 8 p.m.

Tuesday 15

"Toward a Meaningful Life: A Soul-Searching Journey for Every Jew:" Jewish Learning Institute. The objective of this course is to teach new life skills based on traditional Torah thought and to empower individuals of all backgrounds to transform the way they view daily life. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC. Every Tuesday.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting for the patients of Mott Hospital, art projects and card games. 1 p.m. Wii sports including bowling, tennis, golf and baseball. No experience necessary. 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Movie Tuesday: TBE. This month's movie is the Israeli film *The Band's Visit.* 1–3 p.m.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Mourning and Mitzvah: TBE. Cantor Rose leads a class on dealing with issues of mourning and grief. 2:30 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 16

School's Day Out: JCC Youth. Enjoy a fun day of activities featuring either a field trip or a special presentation. $36 for 8 a.m.–4 p.m.; $4 discount for additional siblings. $10 additional for PM care from 4–6 p.m.. (No PM care charge for KK/KC students enrolled that day of the week.) For information, contact deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990.

Music Appreciation Class: JCC and WCC Community Education. "French Music of the Romantic Era," with Nate Adam. Free to all Washtenaw County residents 65 and over. Register at 971-0990 or at the first class. 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch, snacks and beverages will be provided. Noon.

"Get Into the Spirit of Hamentashen:" Jewish Women's Circle of Washtenaw County. Informal meeting of Jewish women, including conversation, an opportunity to discuss and learn about the spirit of Purim giving, and a demo of hamentashen making. Suggested donation of $10. To reserve a spot, and to submit your best hamentashen recipe, contact Esther Goldstein at 995-3276 or email esther@jewmich.com. 7:30 p.m.

The Jewish Life Cycle: BIC. An Introduction with Rabbi Blumenthal. 7:45 p.m.

Thursday 17

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Presentation: JCC-Seniors: A nutritionist from the University of Michigan Hospital and Health System will speak about nutritional supplements including which are healthy, which are useful, and which should be skipped. 1 p.m.

Caregiver Conversations: JCC-Older Adults Programs. This month's topic is "Managing Caregiver Guilt." If you experience bouts of guilt about your role as a caregiver, you are not alone. Learn skills for harnessing that guilt in order to serve you rather than imprison you. For information, contact abbie@jfsannarbor.org or phone 769-0208. 6:30–8 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 18

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 5:30 p.m. Tot and Sukkat Shalom dinner at 6:30 p.m. Sukkat Shalom and Shira at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows.

Shabbat Dinner: TBE. Once monthly adult dinner held before services. $10/adult; $5/children ages 12 and under. Reserve at www.templebethemeth.org or phone 665-4744. 6 p.m.

Service: TBE. With Kol Halev. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 19

Torah Study: TBE. Monthly session led by Rabbi David Aaron, professor of Bible at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati and visiting scholar with the University of Michigan's Frankel Center. 8:50 a.m. in the chapel.

Shabbat Limmud: BIC. With Rabbi Dobrusin. 9 a.m.

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Coolant Flush
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expires 2/28/11

Morning Service: TBE. 10 a.m. in the chapel.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 20

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, plus an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learn the deeper meanings of the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 21

February Break Fun Days: JCC Youth. During Hebrew Day School or Ann Arbor Public School breaks, the JCC Youth Department offers full day programs featuring field trips or special activities for JCC members only in grades K–5. Middle School students may participate as helpers for a reduced fee. $36 per day for 8 a.m.–4 p.m.; $4 discount for additional siblings. $10 per day for PM Care from 4–6 p.m. No PM Care charge for KK/KC students enrolled that day of the week. For information, contact deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. *February 21–25.*

Women's Torah Study: TBE. Women's Torah group, led by Cantor Annie Rose, will study *Tetzaveh* and *Va'yakhel.* 7–8:30 p.m.

Tuesday 22

"Toward a Meaningful Life: A Soul-Searching Journey for Every Jew:" Jewish Learning Institute. The objective of this course is to teach new life skills based on traditional Torah thought and to empower individuals of all backgrounds to transform the way they view daily life. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC. Every Tuesday.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting for the patients of Mott Hospital, art projects and card games. 1 p.m. Wii sports including bowling, tennis, golf and baseball. No experience necessary. 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

"On the Hard Evidence of Exile: Secrecy, Authenticity, and Race in Representations of New Mexico's Crypto-Jews:" U-M Frankel Institute. Ohio State University Scholar Ruby Tapia will discuss the contradictions and tensions between several accounts and documents regarding Crypto-Jewish authenticity. Room 2022 in 202 South Thayer Street. 4 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 23

Music Appreciation Class: JCC and WCC Community Education. "French Music of the Romantic Era," with Nate Adam. Free to all Washtenaw County residents 65 and over. Register at 971-0990 or at the first class. 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch. Snacks and beverages will be provided. Noon.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. Bi-monthly group includes learning and lively discussion. Led by Roger Stutesman. For information, contact rgstutesman@sbcglobal.net. 7:30 p.m.

The Jewish Life Cycle: BIC. An Introduction, led by Rabbi Blumenthal. 7:45 p.m.

Thursday 24

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

Presentation: JCC Seniors. Mark Tucker, lecturer at the University of Michigan and Creative Director of FestiFools, will talk about (and possibly share samples of) the amazing puppets he has help design for FestiFools. 1 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 25

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 5:30 p.m. Tot and Sukkat Shalom dinner at 6:30 p.m. Sukkat Shalom and Shira at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows.

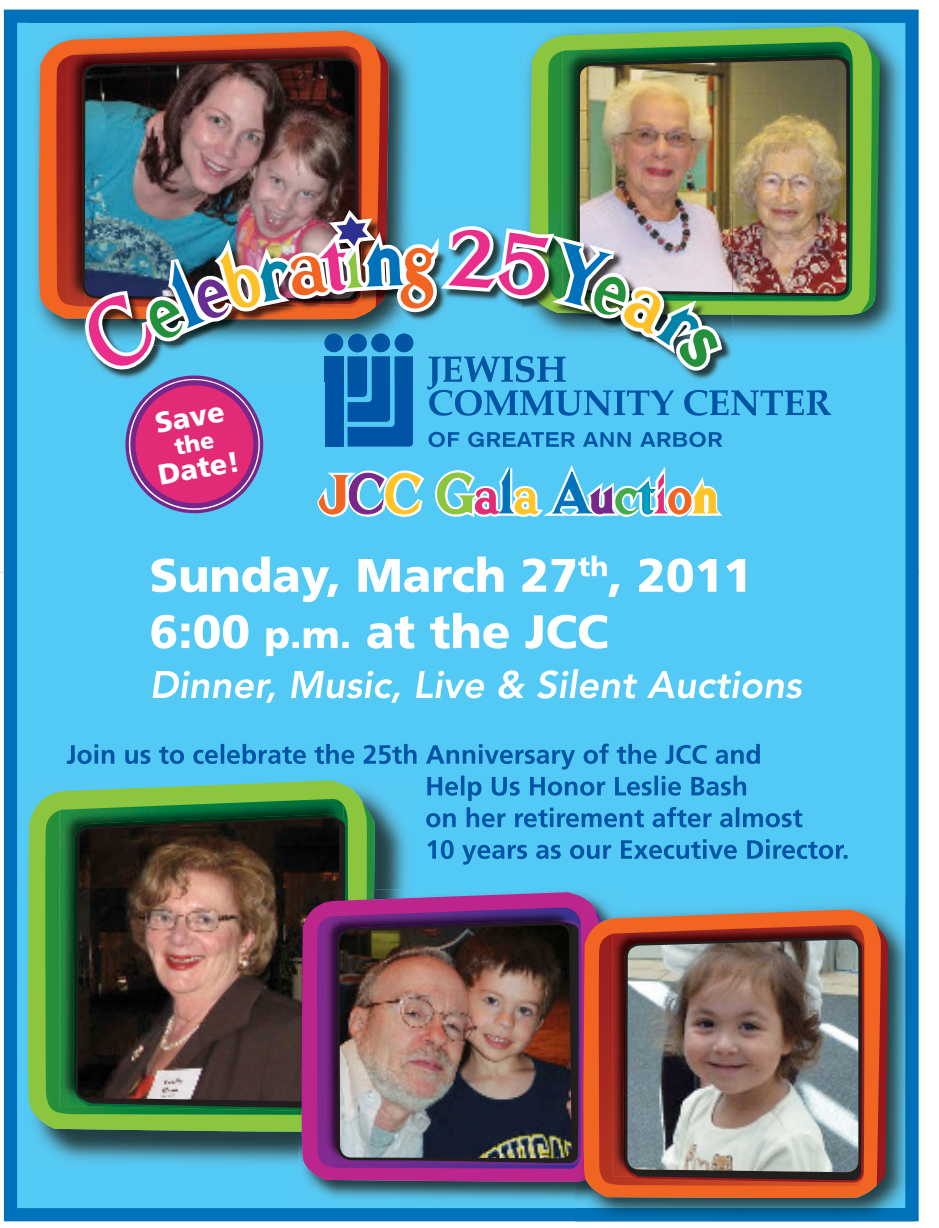
Pulpit Switch Shabbat Services: TBE. Yearly sharing of the pulpit with St. Clare's Episcopal Church with whom TBE jointly owns its building. Reverend Rhodenhiser will give the sermon on Friday night, and Rabbi Delson will give the sermon at the church service on Sunday morning.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 26

Morning Servie: TBE. 10 a.m. in the sanctuary.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Cha-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Calendar

bad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 27

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 28

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Torah Trop: TBE. Ongoing weekly group with Cantor Annie Rose. Noon.

Béit Café: Adult Education Night. TBE. Choose two of five classes to attend, with a South American themed refreshment break at 8 p.m. Topics include: Hebrew Calligraphy; Photography of Synagogues From Around the World; The Story of Esther in Renaissance Art; and "Why American Jews Can't Talk to Each Other About Israel." For information, contact Rabbi Delson at ldelson@templebethemeth.org. 7–9 p.m.

Weekly Friday night Shabbat services

Shabbat Service: AAOM. Services held at UM Hillel. Call 994-9258 in advance to confirm time.

Shabbat Service: BIC. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 5:30 p.m., followed by tot dinner. Sukkat Shalom service at 6:30 p.m. for "tot grads," preceded by dinner. Shira at 6:30 p.m. Oneg for Tot and Sukkat Shalom families at 7 p.m. Traditional Service at 7:30 p.m. Once a month Middle School Service at 7:30 p.m. For information, call 665-4744.

Shabbat Service: Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah. 6:15 PM at the JCC the last Friday each month. Musical Shabbat service followed by vegetarian potluck. Tot Shabbat with optional kid's pizza dinner at 6:00 p.m.. All are welcome to attend. For information, call 913-9705, email info@aarecon.org or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Service: Chabad. Begins at candlelighting time. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals and Jewish holidays. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Weekly Shabbat services

Shabbat Services: AAOM. Morning service, 9:30 a.m. Evening service, 35 minutes before sunset. Call 662-5805 for information. Mincha/Ma'ariv with Seudah Shlisheet and Dvar Torah every week. Torah topics and a bite to eat. Discussions led by Rabbi Rod Glogower and other local scholars. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals. UM Hillel.

Shabbat Services: BIC. 9:30 a.m. Morning childcare from 10 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Shabbat Services: AA Reconstructionist Havurah. Discussion-based format with topics changing monthly. For info, email info@aarecon.org or call 913-9705 or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Services: Chabad. Morning services at 9:45 a.m. Afternoon services 45 minutes before sundown.

Shabbat Services: Pardes Hannah. Generally meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Call 663-4039 for more information. 10 a.m. Led by Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg.

Shabbat Services: TBE. Torah Study with Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m. Morning Minyan with Rabbi Delson and lay leaders at 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m. most weeks. Call the office at 665-4744 or consult website at www.templebethemeth.org for service details.

Home Hospitality for Shabbat and Holiday Meals: AAOM. Call 662-5805 in advance.

Home Hospitality and Meals: Chabad. Every Shabbat and Holiday. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Phone numbers and addresses of frequently listed organizations:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM)
1429 Hill Street 994-5822

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah (AARH)
P.O. Box 7451, Ann Arbor 913-9705

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC)
2000 Washtenaw Ave. 665-9897

Chabad House
715 Hill Street 995-3276

EMU Hillel
965 Washtenaw Ave., Ypsilanti 482-0456

Jewish Community Center (JCC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 971-0990

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 975-9872

Jewish Family Services (JFS)
2245 South State Street 769-0209

Jewish Federation
2939 Birch Hollow Drive 677-0100

Pardes Hannah
2010 Washtenaw Ave. 761-5324

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE)
2309 Packard Road 665-4744

UM Hillel
1429 Hill Street 769-0500

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First Congregational Church

Limmud becoming new favored networking tool for Jewish authors, artists, groups

By Sue Fishkoff

SAN FRANCISCO (JTA)—Journalist and author Lisa Alcalay Klug flew across the country last month to present at Limmud New York, the annual New York version of the worldwide Jewish learning extravaganza.

The January 14-17 conference in upstate New York was Klug's seventh Limmud gathering in 12 months. Like the hundreds of other Limmud presenters whose paths she crosses, she doesn't get paid for her time.

"I've met amazing people, developed new friendships and reinforced past relationships," said Klug, who splits her time in California, New York and Israel. "My world has grown exponentially because of it."

Limmud, which started out 30 years ago in Britain as a conference for professional Jewish educators and has burgeoned into the world's largest network of gatherings promoting informal Jewish education, has become a creative and professional hub for presenters, some of whom have become regulars on the Limmud circuit.

More than 35,000 people took part in one of 55 Limmuds held last year from Siberia to South Africa, according to Limmud. As more branches opened in more countries—there are eight now in the United States alone—it has become a collaborative opportunity for musicians and visual artists, who meet at Limmud and begin working together.

Some performance acts formed for a Limmud event continued afterward, including Los Desterrados, a British band that sings in Ladino, and the klezmer-house dance mash-up project Ghettoplotz. Limmud gives writers an opportunity to promote their books and educators a chance to try out new topics. It also puts Jewish organizations in front of new audiences and potential donors.

Much has been written about Limmud's impact on those who attend—the celebratory atmosphere, the array of learning opportunities, the radical egalitarianism of its all-volunteer structure that encourages participants to present and presenters to participate.

That was all intentional from the beginning, says Raymond Simonson, the project's Britain-based executive director. But what he and other organizers didn't foresee was how Limmud would become a networking tool for presenters.

Unlike most festivals and conferences, which tend to invite experts, anyone can apply to be a Limmud presenter—a big draw for inexperienced presenters and established professionals wanting to try out new material.

"We tell them, you don't get money, but there's an opportunity for people to have access to your merchandise," said Karen Radkowsky, founding president of Limmud NY, which in 2005 became the first Limmud in the United States. "It's an opportunity for them to be exposed to other thoughts and ideas. When they're not giving their own presentations, they go to others.

"It's very different from the GA, where you might fly in, speak, and then leave," she said, referring to the annual General Assembly of the Jewish Federations of North America.

The Limmud structure facilitates this cross-pollination, says Uri Berkowitz, co-chair of Limmud International, which oversees all branches outside the UK. Last month, some 2,500 people went to Coventry, England, for the 30th anniversary Limmud Conference.

"Each Limmud is its own community, with a fresh audience, but they're still part of the same family," Berkowitz told JTA. "That's why presenters can go from one to another. Now that there are enough of them, they'll often know at least one or two other presenters, and can continue the conversations and collaborations."

That's what happened to Klug. In February 2009 she went to Limmud LA on her own dime to talk about her new book, *Cool Jew*, and was spotted by friendly spies from Limmud UK. They invited her to present at Warwick in December 2009, which led to invitations to Limmuds in Atlanta, Berlin, Amsterdam and Budapest. Next month she'll be back at Limmud LA, then on to Winnipeg in March for that Canadian city's first Limmud.

Limmud usually covers travel and accommodations for invited presenters but does not pay them for their presentation.

Klug's experience is not atypical, according to Radkowsky. Core volunteers from the British, New York and Los Angeles Limmuds attend each other's gatherings to poach presenters.

Arthur Kurzweil, a well-known genealogist, educator, magician and former book publisher, has presented at four Limmuds in New York and is headed to his first Limmud LA next month. Like Klug, he is an invited presenter. An experienced public speaker, Kurzweil gets more invitations than he can accept. Limmud is one to which he says yes. "These are my people," Kurzweil said. "It's what I do. Limmud is one more great opportunity to teach and share my interests."

Joel Chasnoff, a stand-up comedian and author of *The 188th Crybaby Brigade*, the story of his experience in the Israeli military, has presented four times at Limmud UK. Last year he led Limmud sessions in New York, Philadelphia and Atlanta, and this February he's headed to Los Angeles.

"The first time I went, I had no idea what it was," he said. "I love it. It's like summer camp. In terms of the audience, I find them smart and interested in Jewish thought. They're in tune with what I talk about."

A number of Jewish organizations have latched onto Limmud as a way to present their message before a self-selected, motivated Jewish audience.

Marc Rosenberg directs One Aliyah, the singles and young professionals department of Nefesh B'Nefesh, which sponsors North American immigration to Israel. He's presented at Limmud UK the past three years, and this year will be his second at the New York one.

"Since Limmud draws such a strong crowd from across the Jewish spectrum and Israel is a central topic, it seems a natural fit for our organization," he told JTA. "By attending Limmud we are able to increase our exposure, tap into trends inside the community and answer anyone's aliyah questions.

"It's a great place to meet activists and information-seeking Jews," agreed Ruth Messinger, president of the American Jewish World Service, who has presented or sent staffers to New York, Philadelphia, Colorado, Los Angeles and Boston, as well as Turkey and three Limmuds in South Africa.

"You can assume the people who choose your session are really interested in what you have to say. And we get to determine, or at least influence, the structure of the presentation, which is not true of most conferences."

Best of all, Messinger added, "It's fun." ■

Mazal Tov

Elana Leflein on her bat mitzvah on February 5.
Leah Weingarten on her bat mitzvah on February 26.
David and Rachel Adler on the birth of their daughter, Zoe Adler.
Joel Rubenstein and Lauren Katz on the birth of their son, Gil Raphael Rubenstein.
Jen and Jim DelProposto on the birth of their daughter, Olivia Brooke, November 1.
Irene and Paul Adler on the birth of their granddaughter, Zoe Ann Adler, daughter of Rachel and David Adler, December 9.
Judy and Paul Freedman on the birth of their grandson, Lane Aryeh Zagar, son of Nick and Sarah Zagar, December 18.
Bette and Alan Cotzin on the birth of their granddaughter, Shira Danielle Kellner, daughter of Debra and Ricky Kellner, December 21.
Sharon and Chuck Newman and Dorothy Newman on the engagement of their daughter and granddaughter, Shaina Newman to Danny Ashare.
Miriam Shaw on the engagement of her son, Dan Shaw, to Gardenia Spiegel.
Evan and Rosemary Mirsky, and Bob and Laurel Hern, on the engagement of their children, Sarah Mirsky and Michael Hern.
Noga Morag-Levine and Jonathan Levine on the engagement of their daughter, Shira, to Jonathan Abel.

Condolences

Fern Vining on the death of her brother, Seymour Greenstone, November 17.
The family of Robert Silver on his death, November 17, in Israel.
Karen Rothstein on the death of her father, Aaron ìRockyî Ross, November 29.
Ruth Scodel on the death of her mother, Barbara Scodel, December 3.
Helaine Reid on the death of her mother, Celia Stern, December 5.
Anne Heybey Wasciuk on the death of her father-in-law, Vincent Wasciuk, December 5.
Bernice Mark on the death of her sister-in-law, Geri Mark Rudd, December 14.
Noga Morag-Levine on the death of her step-father, Shemaryahu Talmon, December 15.
Jennifer Kehoe on the death of her grandmother, Irene Goldberg, January 2.
Susan Allan on the death of her mother, Florence Demirsky Wolf, also grandmother of Jennie Allan.
Aviva Panush on the death of her father, Irving Panush.
Mark Daskin on the death of his mother, Betty Daskin.
Gail Solway Little on the death of her mother, Etta Solway.
Neil Alexander on the death of his mother, Ziwa Alexander Katz.
Larry Tankanow on the death of his father, Edward Tankanow.
Valerie Galler on the death of her grandfather, Richard Toulson.
Ruth Bernard on the death of her brother, Charles Ness.
Steven Silverman on the death of his wife, Ruth Winter.
Andrea Hansell, on the death of her father, A. David Goodman, January 12.
The family of Pearl Axelrod, on her death, January 16.
Leah Wright, on the death of her grandmother, Frances Ober, January 20.

ACLU talk at JCS, continued from page 1

cans' civil liberties into the nation's foremost defender of the rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. The advancement of civil liberties in the past 90 years arguably represents one of the most significant developments in American history. With more than 500,000 members, 53 state affiliates, nearly 200 staff attorneys, and thousands of volunteer attorneys, the ACLU continues to oppose government abuse and supports individual freedoms through public education, litigation and legislation.

Since joining the staff of the Michigan ACLU in 1997, Steinberg has worked on numerous high impact, high profile cases on a wide range of civil liberties issues including: freedom of speech and expression; post 9-11 issues; religious freedom; racial justice; LGBT rights; police misconduct; women's rights; reproductive freedom; voting rights; right to counsel; and prisoner rights. He was recently selected by Harvard Law School as a public interest fellow.

The event is free and open to the public. If you wish to join in after the program for a buffet dinner from a local restaurant, the cost is $10 per person or $25 per family of four. ■

Irans bomb delayed, continued from page 27

Iran to expand such inspections ahead of this weekend's talks, said Trita Parsi, the director of the National Iranian American Council and the author of a number of books on Iran-Israel relations.

"The Obama administration has changed the metrics," Parsi said.

"We're not talking about the LEU count," he said, referring to Iran's burgeoning supply of low-enriched uranium, which had worried the West. "We're talking about the centrifuges that have been destroyed. Shifting the conversation to Stuxnet puts you in a stronger position."

Domestically, Parsi said, the revelations also may pay off as the White House fends off demands from Congress that it ratchet up pressure on Iran, including through the military option.

Berman's outlook suggested that was not likely.

"Let me know when Iran certifiably suspends enrichment and allows inspections, throughout all its territory, and then we can have a conversation about sanctions," he said. "Having that military option on the table is an important part of achieving that goal and affecting their calculations." ■

New German anti Semitism, continued from page 26

time the left and the right were united in criticizing Israel."

Still, German leftists like Petra Pau, a member of the Left Party in the Bundestag, condemn Israeli actions while demonstrating steadfast opposition to anti-Semitism.

Others, such as Alfred Grosser, a prominent Franco-German Jewish intellectual, maintain that Israeli actions fuel anti-Semitism throughout the world.

Grosser, 85, a controversial figure who survived the Holocaust as a protected French citizen during World War II, equates Gaza with a concentration camp. And he accuses the Central Council Of Jews in Germany of silencing any criticism of Israel.

A number of organizations in Germany are trying to combat the new anti-Semitism. One innovative program is "Active Against Anti-Semitism," designed by the American Jewish Committee for Muslim children in Berlin schools.

In another program, at the Jewish Museum in Berlin, Murat Akan, a 32-year-old German of Turkish ancestry, is one of five Turkish guides the museum employs in order to encourage Muslim youth to learn about Germany's rich Jewish heritage. Some 200,000 Muslims live in Berlin, a city with a population of 3.5 million. While some of the Muslim teenagers sympathize with the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, Akan said, others are openly anti-Semitic.

"They often ask me why they should feel connected to anything that happened in German history, like the Holocaust," Akan said. "We have to teach them why it's so important to learn what hatred can do."

Another innovative program, Kreuzberger Initiative Gegen Antisemitismus, or Kreuzberg Initiative Against Anti-Semitism, concentrates its efforts on the predominantly Turkish neighborhood of Kreuzberg. The initiative also conducts workshops on anti-Semitism and the Middle East conflict.

These innovative programs suggest ways in which the Holocaust narrative can still speak to future generations.

Last October, Andres Nader, 41, a Doctor of Comparative Cultures, took a group of Palestinian teenagers to Auschwitz in a trip sponsored by the Amadeu Antonio Foundation, an organization that combats neo-Nazism, racism and anti-Semitism. The foundation honors the memory of a black man from Angola who was murdered by young Germans.

Nader said that something shifted for these teenagers while in Auschwitz. The young people were shocked by the murder of so many Jews in this place. They said they would never again use the word "Jew" as an insult.

"I don't know how people could do this to other human beings," one boy said. "I just can't imagine anyone murdering my little sister." ■

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Check out the February issue of *Inc.* featuring Ari Weinzweig's *A Lapsed Anarchists Guide to Building a Better Business*, hailed by the magazine as one of "2010 Best Books for Business Owners."

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